

Dusenbury

HEART OF A CITY

FLORIDA PLAYERS
ROOM 361 ASB
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, FL 32611

PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY LESLEY STORM

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NEW YORK, N. Y.



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HAYES HUNTER, 1270 SIXTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
CITY.

Heart of a City was produced in New York by Gilbert Miller at the Henry Miller Theatre, on February 12, 1942. The present version has been somewhat simplified, technically, by the author.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JUDY
TONI
VALERIE
BUBBLES
ROSALIND
JOAN
FRENCHIE
PATSY
LILA SADDLE, *Theatre Manager*
GERT, *Call Girl*
MRS. GOOD
ANNA, *an Italian Woman*
DAISY, *Bar Maid*
TOMMY, *Song Writer*
THE GROUP CAPTAIN
PAUL LUNDY

SCENE: Basement dressing-room in the Windmill Theatre in London and small corner of a Bomber Command somewhere in England.

TIME: During the early months of the War.

Sound effect records can be purchased through the Service for all effects needed in this play. There are four records. Write for details.

PROPERTIES

Make-up and toilet articles on dressing-tables.
Stage photos and clippings and newspapers on same.
Several newspapers.
Package of cigarettes (on piano).
Hard-boiled egg.
Small clock.
Pad and pencil.
2 First-Aid kits.
Cups of coffee.
Coffee tray.
Knitting things for the girls.
Small handbag.
Small coins (a few).
Aspirin bottle and 2 or 3 tablets.
Glass of water.
Folded piece of paper.
Bottles, glasses, etc., for the bar.
Rosary.
Several packages of cigarettes and matches.
Will (folded paper).
Nightie (to be torn up).
Small suitcase.
Spirit-lamp stove.
Small kettle.
Sofa pillows and mattresses.
Teacups, saucers, sugar bowl, cream pitcher, and
spoons.
Trash-can.
Telegram.
Pocket flask.
Folded paper (divorce document).
Champagne bottle and 3 glasses.
Photograph of Rosalind.
Sandwiches.

HEART OF A CITY

PROLOGUE

As the house lights go down an orchestra backstage is heard playing the chorus of "Tipperary." When the music reaches the closing phrase, curtain opens, revealing the stage of the Windmill Theatre, with a traveller curtain closing off about six feet upstage. JUDY and TONI, in military costumes and carrying sticks, enter R. in front of traveller, marching in time with the music to C. They reach C. as the chorus ends. The orchestra continues, playing the verse, and JUDY and TONI sing it. As they go on into the chorus, the chorus line enters dancing, three girls coming from R. and three from L. They meet at C. above JUDY and TONI, and form line. At "So till that happy day," etc., JUDY marches L. to down L. of chorus line, and TONI marches R. to down R. of chorus line, where they remain during a repeat chorus which all sing and the chorus girls dance. Toward end of song JUDY and TONI march C., meet, face audience, and end song with salute. At end of song, fast blackout. JUDY, TONI and GIRLS exit during blackout.

ACT I

SCENE 1

The blackout between Prologue and Act I, Scene 1 is very short. The lights come up almost immediately, revealing a basement dressing-room in the Windmill Theatre. It is the room occupied by JUDY, TONI, and ROSALIND. The only entrance is U. C. It leads to a stairway, wide, which turns, or curves, off R., going up to stage and other parts of the theatre. [If this is not practicable, then use simply an ordinary door.] The entrance and stairway are wide and deep enough for good visibility, as considerable action takes place there. Just above back wall of dressing-room, leading off L. from lower stairway landing, and visible through main entrance, is a doorway leading to the corridor, to chorus dressing-rooms, etc. Down R., high up on the wall—about six feet from the floor—is a small semicircular window, practical, opening on stage. From outside, it is at street level.

The room is anything but handsome, architecturally. Most of the wall is of rough brick, unpainted.

The furnishings are a bit shabby, but colorful and suggestive of the glamor of backstage. Just L. of C. entrance is a battered upright piano, keys facing L. Opposite, just R. of C.

entrance, is JUDY'S dressing-table, a chair R. of it. R. of JUDY'S dressing-table, U. R., is a large screen, behind which the girls change when they have company. D. R., under high window, is ROSALIND'S dressing-table against wall, with a chair L. of it. R. C., a small stool. D. L. is TONI'S dressing-table against L. wall, with chair R. of it. Above TONI'S dressing-table, against L. wall, a table with a hot plate on it. Above this, in U. L. corner, a sink, or wash-basin, in a tiny alcove. Over it, on wall, a small cupboard for tea, a few dishes, etc. Numerous red buckets of sand marked FIRE on small bracketed shelves around walls. Various "No Smoking" signs on wall of stairway well outside main entrance. Theatrical posters here and there. Waste-baskets at all dressing-tables. Dressing-tables equipped with large mirrors with shaded lights all around them. Make-up and various toilet articles littered over dressing-tables, photographs and press clippings stuck in edges of mirrors. ROSALIND'S dressing-table covered with newspapers. Various water, steam, and ventilation pipes mar the room.

As the lights come up, the stage is empty. From offstage we hear the applause of the audience and the chatter of the GIRLS as they come from stage after having finished the chorus number.

Enter TONI and JUDY.

JUDY. What a house! [She crosses to mirror over her dressing-table, and repairs her make-up.]

[The CHORUS GIRLS pass open door, talking and whistling as they run to make their change.]

TONI. That's not a house! [*At her dressing-table D. L.*]

JUDY. Two full rows!

TONI. Anyway, they liked Tommy's new number. [*Sits.*]

JUDY. They were crazy about it—all twenty-three of 'em.

[*GERT, the call girl, runs down stairs and knocks on opened door.*]

GERT. Second number started. [*She enters.*] Here's the *Express* you asked for, Miss. [*TONI rises, takes paper, puts down lip-stick.*] All up for number three! [*GERT starts to exit.*]

JUDY. Gert! Gert!

GERT. What? [*Stops.*]

JUDY. Go and get me a couple of sandwiches, duckie. Egg and cress.

GERT. Egg! There's been no eggs for a week.

JUDY. Tomatoes, then.

GERT. I'll see what I can do. [*GERT goes.*]

JUDY. Gert—Gertie!

[*GERT comes back, stands in entrance.*]

GERT. Yes?

JUDY. Keep an eye on the cat. I'm beginning to have a queer feeling in my stomach when I look at him.

[*GERT goes out.*]

TONI. [*Indignantly.*] Look! [*Crosses to JUDY and holds out newspaper.*]

JUDY. What is it, duckie?

TONI. Ken's wife cashing in on what Ken's done.

JUDY. [*Looking at paper.*] I don't like her face—not one bit. [*JUDY continues to make up.*]

[*TONI stares at picture.*]

TONI. [*Reads.*] "Mrs. Kenneth Crouch waits for her hero-husband, after his ordeal of nine days in an open

boat." And here's a photograph of the log he wrote—wrote it on the back of the labels off Nestlé's Milk cans.

JUDY. I read about it—about him saving twelve men. He's a good guy, that.

TONI. [*Sits on step, c.*] And listen to what she tells the reporters: "I always knew Ken would do something wonderful!" I could tell them different. Day before he left, she told him she hoped he would never come back! [*Rises, goes D. L.*]

JUDY. Nice woman!

GERT. [*Off, through street grating.*] No tomatoes.

JUDY. [*Rises and crosses to window.*] Good Lord! I thought we were blockading *them*.

GERT. [*Off.*] I'll see if we can get cheese.

JUDY. Well, get something, and quick!

TONI. I want Rosalind to see this. [*Starts for exit, sees VALERIE, stops.*]

[*During lines with GERT, VALERIE is entering. She wears a very flimsy costume, and is chewing gum in a cow-like way. She walks with the peculiar step of show-girls and models. JUDY and TONI exchange glances.*]

JUDY. [*R. c.*] And what are you this time, Valerie, dear? Lucrece?

VALERIE. [*C.*] I'm Helen of Troy. [*Strikes a pose.*]

TONI. Then would you mind moving the fanny that launched a thousand ships? [*She slaps it and dashes for exit.*]

VALERIE. A-ow! [*Crosses slightly L.*]

TONI. I'm going to ring up the paper and give 'em the real story.

JUDY. [*At table.*] They wouldn't print it. They like the public to think every hero has a loving wife waiting for him.

TONI. [*Stops. Turns in doorway.*] He's got me.

JUDY. You're not his wife, duckie.

TONI. I'm as good as.

JUDY. Not for this war. This is a holy war. Everything in it's got to be regular.

TONI. Oh, shut up. If Gert calls, I'll be phoning. [TONI exits.]

VALERIE. [*Languidly.*] I could have stopped it. [*Leaning on end of piano.*]

JUDY. Stopped what?

VALERIE. The war. At least I could have stopped it from starting.

JUDY. Flown to Munich or something?

VALERIE. [*In same tone.*] I was in Munich. I was there for a year. I danced for the Fuehrer.

JUDY. [*Curtly.*] Fuehrer? Hitler's the name, dearie.

VALERIE. He was crazy about me. [*Comes down.*]

JUDY. [*Looking her up and down.*] Acres and acres of it and all his. Must have been one of his doubles. [*Takes dress and goes behind screen.*]

VALERIE. He told me I was the Perfect Aryan. [*Strikes pose.*]

JUDY. Perhaps they all use the same gag —— [*Slowly.*] What went wrong with your dewy romance?

VALERIE. [*Idly, crosses down R. to ROSALIND's dressing-table. Snitches perfume.*] He got very busy. All that business with Czecho-slovakia.

[JUDY drops everything, turns, stares at her incredulously.]

JUDY. He got busy all right. . . .

BUBBLES. [*Puts her head round door.*] Judy, can I sneak a cigarette?

JUDY. Sure, pack of Players on the piano.

BUBBLES. Thanks! [*Takes and lights cigarette. Sits at TONI's table D. L.*]

JUDY. [*Coming from behind screen.*] Come on, Frau Hitler, make yourself useful. Do up this zip for me.

VALERIE. [*Zippering JUDY's costume.*] I've got a friend in

front tonight. I really came in to ask if you'd lend me your fox cape.

JUDY. How d'you know I've got a fox cape?

VALERIE. One of the girls told me . . . we're going up to the Four Hundred for supper. He's from the Japanese embassy.

BUBBLES. [*Angry.*] What d'you want with clothes on if you're going out with a Jap?

VALERIE. [*Haughtily.*] We're having supper in public.

JUDY. That's when they do it.

VALERIE. [*In same tone.*] You've got the strangest ideas.

JUDY. [*Coming to ROSALIND's dressing-table, pushing*

VALERIE C.] They're a treat to some of yours. Go on.

Scram! You're taking up all the mirror.

VALERIE. [*L. of JUDY.*] Can I have the cape?

JUDY. [*At ROSALIND's table.*] No! It's not going out with a Jap.

BUBBLES. He might commit hari-kari all over it.

VALERIE. Has Rosalind got one?

JUDY. [*Briefly.*] No! And don't bother her.

VALERIE. Why not? I was told when I came here there was no star. But she's treated like the star.

JUDY. She *is* the star.

VALERIE. I can't see why. [*VALERIE gives a languid shrug and turns to go out.*]

JUDY. Better stick your clothes on with adhesive tape before you go out with your Japanese friend.

VALERIE. Oh, shut up! [*And she flounces out.*]

JUDY. [*Returning to her own dressing-table.*] Gawd, what a cow!

BUBBLES. Still I wouldn't mind borrowing that chassis of hers for the evening. [*And BUBBLES exits.*]

[*A quick knock and GERT dashes in. She puts something on JUDY's dressing-table.*]

GERT. [*Breathlessly.*] A hard-boiled egg. [*GERT dashes out again.*]

JUDY. [*Calling after her.*] Gert! Darling! Angel child!

GERT. [*In corridor.*] Third number on. Third number on.

[JUDY cracks egg and starts peeling it. Enter ROSALIND.]

JUDY. Look!

ROSALIND. Heavens! An egg! Where did you get it?

JUDY. [*Taking a bite.*] Gert—her brother works in an antique shop.

ROSALIND. [*Fanning herself.*] Let's open the window a bit, sweetie. This room's like an oven.

JUDY. We can't. Just closed it: blackout time.

ROSALIND. Not yet. [*Picks up clock from her dressing-table D. R.*] It's twenty past nine. [JUDY opens window.

ROSALIND *flops into chair by her table and fans herself with newspaper.*] What a house tonight! The same front rows of old men sitting there in the dark with their dead pans.

JUDY. [*Returning to table.*] Worse than the first?

ROSALIND. If that's possible.

[JOAN comes in with pencil, pad, pile of First Aid kits. JOAN is a strip-tease girl. Upon putting the kits on JUDY's table.]

JOAN. Evening, girls!

ROSALIND. Hello, Joan.

JUDY. [*Rising.*] What have you got this time?

JOAN. First Aid kits. Two. Sign, please.

JUDY. Yes, Sergeant! [*She salutes.*]

JOAN. [*To ROSALIND.*] Your fire duty tonight, Rosalind, you and Val.

[JUDY hands pad back.]

ROSALIND. Oh, not with that tramp again.

JUDY. The human incendiary! Take along a bucket of sand and put her out.

JOAN. Oh, and I fixed a knitting circle in here for tomorrow at three. Cheerio! [*Exits.*]

JUDY. Just a hundred pounds of efficiency in the raw. L. S. knew what she was doing when she stuck in a few nudes.

ROSALIND. Without them she couldn't even sell out her front rows. The ballet folds up tonight. . . . And *King Lear*. . . . And *Black Velvet* and that new show at the Gaiety.

JUDY. Thank God for the old men.

[*A knock on door. Enter LILA SADDLE. Comes C.*]

LILA. Hello, girls. All set?

JUDY. All set for what? That house?

LILA. [*Falsely bright.*] It's not so good—but it might be worse.

JUDY. [*Smiling.*] Which is it tonight—the heat, humidity, or the war?

LILA. The bad news from France, I reckon.

ROSALIND. Is there anything new?

LILA. Haven't heard since morning—the government's in Bordeaux. But France'll turn round and fight yet. Don't forget it's a great army, the French army.

ROSALIND. [*Unconvincingly.*] Yes.

LILA. [*Trying to be bright.*] All we want is a bit of good news and people's spirits'll go up again. We've had a run of bad news since Norway—it doesn't do the theatre much good.

JUDY. Yes. Why can't we have a victory?

LILA. Never mind. Wait till the French turn round. Then they'll get dug into trenches again the way they did in the last war. And we'll be having a steady stream of boys on leave all the time. Packed houses every night.

JUDY. I don't remember a packed house. They were before my time.

LILA. [*Leans on TONI's table, D. L.*] We're not so bad as

some. They played to four pounds at the Shaftesbury last night—and six at the St. James.

ROSALIND. What did we do?

LILA. [*Hesitantly.*] Six pounds ten the first house. Eight on the second. [*Optimistically.*] But wait till we have a victory. We'll be holding them back at the doors.

[NEWSBOY'S voice in street.]

NEWSBOY. Late special! *Star—News—Standard*—late special!

ROSALIND. [*Jumping up.*] Must get a paper. [*Goes to door and shouts.*] Gert! Get me a paper, will you? [*Exits.*]

JUDY. She's done nothing but buy papers all day. You'd think it was her war. [*Indicating heap on ROSALIND'S dressing-table.*] Look at them.

LILA. Why doesn't she get it from the radio?

JUDY. Somebody always throws something at it. You can stand bad news but not in a B. B. C. accent.

[FRENCHIE puts her head round door. She is in some distress. She is crying. Speaks good English with French accent.]

FRENCHIE. May I speak to you, Miss Saddle?

LILA. [*Comes to L. c.*] Sure, Frenchie. Come in.

FRENCHIE. [*Sobbingly.*] Miss Saddle, I cannot go on to-night.

[LILA puts her arm around FRENCHIE, who sobs on her shoulder.]

LILA. [*Kindly.*] There now, Frenchie, you mustn't get like this. Everything's going to be all right.

FRENCHIE. No. It's all terrible. It is the end.

LILA. [*Taking out her handkerchief and wiping FRENCHIE'S eyes. She tries to laugh but is not convincing.*] The end of what? It hasn't begun yet. Come on, Frenchie, this isn't like you.

FRENCHIE. [*Weeping.*] My mother is in Paris—and my sisters.

LILA. They'll be all right.

[*Enter ROSALIND with paper.*]

ROSALIND. [*Going to her table, sitting.*] Churchill to speak at half-past nine, it says—it's nearly that now.

JUDY. They've got a nerve selling their papers on that!

FRENCHIE. Ces sales Boches! Vous ne pouvez vraiment pas me demander que je danse ce soir! C'est impossible!

LILA. I didn't know he was speaking. Come on, Frenchie, we'll get that eye-black of yours fixed.

FRENCHIE. [*As LILA leads her out.*] I cannot go on.

LILA. [*Gently.*] Sure, you'll go on.

[*They go out. Voice from street.*]

VOICE. [*Outside.*] Put that light out there!

[*JUDY dives at window and bangs it to.*]

JUDY. Cripes! The blackout!

ROSALIND. Poor Frenchie.

JUDY. Her mother's in Paris.

ROSALIND. Something terrible's always happening to somebody.

JUDY. [*Returning to her table.*] You go about wondering when it's going to happen to you.

ROSALIND. It'll happen to us soon enough if France falls.

JUDY. France can't fall.

ROSALIND. I wonder what Churchill is going to say? Have you seen Tommy tonight?

JUDY. [*Briefly.*] Yes.

ROSALIND. He's all boozed up again—poor Tommy.

JUDY. [*Rises, comes down a bit. With some heat.*] What d'you mean, poor Tommy? The best lyric-writer in London.

ROSALIND. I only say poor Tommy because he's working in a dump like this.

JUDY. Why not? It's a regular job. Where else do they change their show every four weeks?

ROSALIND. He should be with Cochran or somebody—with his brains.

JUDY. And when did Cochran last put anything on? Poor Tommy, my eye! It doesn't do a man any good for people to go about saying poor Tommy.

ROSALIND. [*Rises, goes to her.*] Darling, I don't go about saying it. I adore Tommy.

JUDY. [*Paying no heed.*] And he's getting in with the gramophone companies.

ROSALIND. He could if he wanted to—but he doesn't. D'you notice how he seems to have shrunk lately?—his collars are getting too big for him.

JUDY. [*Sits at her table.*] He's not the only one. The happiest people in this war are the soldiers—they don't have the worry of it.

ROSALIND. Tommy worries because they won't take him.

JUDY. He needn't. They'll take him soon enough.

GERT. [*Calling outside.*] Fourth number! Fourth number!

JUDY. That's me, damn it. [*Jumps up, runs for entrance.*]

ROSALIND. [*Quietly.*] Judy, tell me, are you in love with Tommy?

[*GERT bangs on door.*]

GERT. Fourth number! Fourth number!

[*JUDY is going.*]

JUDY. Don't let that cow Valerie sneak my fox cape.

ROSALIND. I'll watch her.

[*JUDY goes. Comes back quickly to door.*]

JUDY. [*In a quick whisper.*] Here's Tommy. [*Pantomimes drinking.*] I'll bring him in here and send Gert with some black coffee. There'll be trouble if Lila sees

him like this . . . [*Turning round.*] Hello, Tommy . . . come in. Rosalind wants to talk to you.

[*TOMMY enters. One can see he has been drinking, but he is in full control of himself.*]

GERT. [*At door.*] Come on, Miss, fourth number.

JUDY. All right, I'm coming. Good-bye, Tommy. [*She exits.*]

TOMMY. [*By piano.*] I was just coming along to see you.

ROSALIND. Fine. How are things, Tommy?

[*TOMMY throws himself into a chair.*]

TOMMY. [*Mockingly. Sits in chair at TONI's dressing-table.*] Everything's perfectly beautiful. God's in his heaven, darling, all's right with the world.

ROSALIND. Nice to know.

TOMMY. Isn't it?

ROSALIND. [*Brightly.*] Have you finished that number you were writing for me?

TOMMY. [*Vaguely.*] Was I?

ROSALIND. You know you were. It was to be ready to rehearse in the morning.

TOMMY. Was it?

ROSALIND. [*Crosses to him. Crisply.*] And it's going to be. Pull your socks up, Tommy. What's the use of fooling around like this?

TOMMY. [*Smiling.*] How would you have me? Full of purpose? Full of grim resolution?

ROSALIND. [*Crosses R. to C.*] You should take your job seriously—it's a good job.

TOMMY. It's excellent. I'm extremely grateful for it.

ROSALIND. [*Turns to him.*] Where's that enthusiasm you used to have, Tommy?

TOMMY. Last summer's four-leaved clover, darling, pressed in a book. [*He sits up and looks at her.*]

ROSALIND. Oh, stop it. [*She crosses, sits at her table.*]

TOMMY. [*Rises, crosses R. C.*] The fair ground's closed.

The merry-go-round's packed up. The music's stopped—what are you making up your face for?

[*Enter GERT with coffee.*]

GERT. Judy sent me along with this.

ROSALIND. [*Crosses c. to GERT, takes coffee.*] Not before time—drink it up, Tommy, and talk sense. Thanks, Gert. [*Gives TOMMY coffee and crosses back to table, sits.*]

TOMMY. [*Solemnly.*] Thanks, Gert. [*TOMMY sits on stool R. C. and sips coffee while GERT goes out.*] What use am I just hanging around the theatre? When I was a child there was a millwheel. When it was idle it was dank and slimy and horrible, but as soon as it was in use the water spun round it like silver. It became a lovely thing.

ROSALIND. You'll be used, Tommy. We'll all be used.

[*He rises, crosses to ROSALIND and looks at her while she does her hair.*]

TOMMY. I love you, Rosalind. I wish you loved me a little, but ——

ROSALIND. [*Lightly.*] But I do, Tommy.

TOMMY. I adore you. More than anything, I want to marry you.

ROSALIND. Don't talk about it now, darling.

TOMMY. I have to talk. I'm less than half-alive, but with you I'd come to life again. I'd have roots in the earth. The hurricane could roar.

ROSALIND. I don't want to think about marriage now. How can we? We don't know from day to day what's going to happen.

TOMMY. We know the sun's going to rise—and set.

ROSALIND. That doesn't help much if we don't know what it's going to rise on . . . I can't think about it now,

Tommy. I'm too uneasy and worried—and frightened.
[*Changing her tone.*] How's news tonight?

TOMMY. [*Turns from her, goes R. C.*] Wonderful. Perfectly marvelous. [*Seemingly casual. Sits on stool.*] France has thrown in her hand.

[*ROSALIND stares at him in shocked silence.*]

ROSALIND. [*In a whisper.*] WHAT?

TOMMY. [*In same tone.*] Didn't you know they were going to? It's been obvious since Sedan.

ROSALIND. Oh, Tommy! . . . we're alone.

TOMMY. [*Steadily.*] Well? . . . We've been alone before.

[*ROSALIND shakes head despairingly. She is crying.*]

ROSALIND. Think of it, Tommy,—the Channel's only twenty miles wide!

TOMMY. But it's deep.

ROSALIND. [*Whispering.*] Dear God . . . [*With a touch of hysteria.*] Tommy, will they come here? Shall we see them walking along Piccadilly? Shall we see them crowding our people off the pavements? Tommy! I can't bear it! I'd so much rather die!

TOMMY. [*Quietly.*] We'd all so much rather die. [*With a smile.*] That's why we'll never see them walking along Piccadilly.

ROSALIND. [*Still slightly hysterical.*] Why didn't we see this coming? Why aren't we ready? What have we been doing all these years? [*TOMMY gets up, walks restlessly round. Puts coffee on piano. They don't speak for a moment. ROSALIND has her elbows on her knees and her hands pressed to her face.*] Poor France!

TOMMY. [*Bitterly.*] Poor us.

[*GERT's voice.*]

GERT. Fifth number—fifth number ready!

[ROSALIND gets up quickly, dabbing her eyes, tears down a dress from the rack and disappears behind curtain.]

ROSALIND. [*As she goes.*] I forgot I was on next.

JUDY. [*Enters.*] Heard about France?

TOMMY. [*Briefly, at piano.*] Yes.

JUDY. Frenchie's crying her eyes out. [*She sits down grimly. Roughly.*] I never felt better in my life . . . now we know where we are. Do you mind if I turn on the radio? [*Goes D. R., turns it on.*]

GERT. [*Bangs on door.*] Fifth number!

JUDY. [*Falsely bright.*] I guess we're for the Blitz next. How about a new number, Tommy? [*Sings.*] "For the Blitz is coming—the sky is humming ——"

[TOMMY turns away.]

ROSALIND. [*Behind screen.*] Yes, how about it, Tommy?

JUDY. [*Looking at TOMMY.*] Come on, Misery—you only die once.

TOMMY. [*Smiling slightly at her.*] Fortunately, you only live once.

JUDY. [*Dabbing powder on her face.*] Oh, come on, Tommy, make a good number out of it before someone else gets the idea.

ROSALIND. What are we going to do?

VOICE. [*Churchill on radio.*] "We shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be. We will fight on beaches, landing grounds, in the fields, in the streets, and on the hills. We shall never surrender."

CURTAIN

ACT I

SCENE 2

SCENE: *The same. Three months later. The aerial Blitz is in its second week. It is Monday*

morning. A knitting party is in progress. JUDY, FRENCHIE, ROSALIND, BUBBLES, and JOAN are struggling painfully with their knitting. MRS. GOOD is supervising them, though lost at the moment in one of her interminable cheerful air-raid reminiscences.

FRENCHIE is D. R. in chair before ROSALIND's table. ROSALIND is on stool R. C. JUDY is at her own table. BUBBLES is on bench at piano. JOAN is D. L. on chair at TONI's table. MRS. GOOD standing C.

MRS. GOOD. . . . so there was Mr. Simpson standing in the entrance to the shelter yelling to her to come down. "I can't come down yet," says she, "not until I've found my teeth!" That didn't 'arf make Mr. Simpson angry. "You come on down right away," 'e says, "teeth or no teeth. Old Hitler's dropping bombs tonight—not sandwiches." [*MRS. GOOD rocks with laughter at her own story. JUDY and ROSALIND laugh, too.*]

ROSALIND. [*Tangled in her knitting.*] Oh, dear, now I'm all tangled up again!

MRS. GOOD. Now, Rosalind, you really did ought to concentrate!

JOAN. How can anyone concentrate, you old biddy, with you burbling away about your air-raids!

ROSALIND. [*Wail.*] Oh, Goody, dear, how *does* it go?

MRS. GOOD. Knit two . . . purl two . . . knit three . . . purl three . . . knit six . . . slip six . . . Oh, wait a minute. Is that right? . . . oh, well, slip six, anyway . . . cast off the beginning of the next row . . .

ROSALIND. Makes me dizzy.

MRS. GOOD. Then rib for one and a half inches . . . then repeat . . . there!

ROSALIND. [*Giving up the unequal struggle.*] You people in Battersea seem to get all the raids, Goody . . .

MRS. GOOD. That's right, they're trying to get the power

station—and they miss it—knock on wood! [*She knocks on JUDY's table.*]

BUBBLES. Don't you get awfully scared?

MRS. GOOD. Scared? No-o. We got a bit windy to begin with—till we knew where to go and what to do . . . now it's easy. The minute you 'ear them coming over you get your little torch and your little thermos full of tea and you go nice and tidy to your own little corner. Some people fancy under the stairs, and some people under the kitchen table. The thing is just to go where you've got to go and take it easy . . . [*Rises hastily.*] and talking about going, I better be buzzing along. I've four more rooms to tidy yet—then I'm due at the hospital to see my daughter . . . [*Turns as she goes.*] if it's a boy, she's going to call 'im Winston.

[*GERT enters.*]

GERT. Mrs. Good, you can come and do the boss's office now.

MRS. GOOD. Aw—all right. [*She exits.*]

GERT. You girls, you're wanted on stage. Frenchie, Joan, Bubbles. [*She exits.*]

GIRLS. [*Going out.*] All right.

ROSALIND. [*Walks to her table.*] M'm. I've had about five hours in three nights.

JUDY. [*Yawns.*] Me, too. Can you get lockjaw from yawning?

ROSALIND. Don't know. [*Polishing her nails.*] Suppose L. S. decides to fold up?

JUDY. What else can she do? We were the only theatre open on Saturday night and we weren't a quarter full at that. I can't think who'd want to go to a theatre these nights.

ROSALIND. Foreign troops with nowhere else to go. Free Poles, Free Dutch, Free French —

JUDY. Free seats.

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] Not from Lila S. Half price, maybe.

JUDY. [*Frowning over her knitting.*] You have to be a bloody acrobat to do what this book says.

ROSALIND. Have you any money if the show folds up?

JUDY. Not a sausage.

ROSALIND. Will have to join up in something.

JUDY. One and tuppence a day. Flat heels. Wool stockings and black drawers. Oh, boy!

ROSALIND. A girl I know drives cars for generals. She doesn't have to wear black drawers.

JUDY. Who told you? The general?

[*Enter TONI with a small bag. She has just come from the station.*]

TONI. Hello! Still alive? [*Crosses to her table, throws down bag.*]

JUDY. Hello. What's the matter with you—you look terrible!

TONI. I've no make-up on. I've been seeing my mother.

ROSALIND. We're joining up if the show folds.

TONI. The uniforms never fit. The old girls at the top see to that. I'd rather be a vivandiere.

JUDY. What's that?

ROSALIND. Remember Dietrich in that picture with Gary Cooper? She took off her shoes and followed him into the desert.

JUDY. You'd have to take off more than your shoes if you had to go tearing across the desert after a tank.

TONI. I hear you had a bad blitz last night.

ROSALIND. What do you mean, "you hear"? Weren't you in London?

TONI. No! I was in the country.

ROSALIND. It was terrible. It went on all night. I slept under the billiard table in the club next door.

JUDY. I slept in the coal cellar. It stank of cats.

TONI. [*Taking off her coat.*] Has L. S. said anything about what she's doing?

ROSALIND. Not yet. We're just waiting for her.

TONI. I spent last night at Kedlington. That's where Mother is, and my sister and my brother's wife.

ROSALIND. Evacuated?

TONI. No. It's a bomber station.

JUDY. Your brother's a pilot, isn't he?

TONI. [*Nods.*] He was over Germany last night. . . . I haven't slept a wink.

JUDY. Neither have we.

TONI. [*Starts changing into slacks and sweater.*] Mother's taken a bungalow there to be near him—just outside the airfield. I was there last night. Never again.

ROSALIND. Why?

TONI. I couldn't stand it. He comes in about eight at night before they start off, and has some supper. And everybody hangs round him. It's agony. All of them being brave and not knowing if they'll ever see him again.

[JUDY lights cigarette.]

ROSALIND. Must be terrible, Toni.

TONI. And after he goes out they sit there—those women, his wife, his mother, his sisters—and listen for the bombers taking off—counting them—one—two—three—four—five—six. And then everything's quiet—and all sit and talk and knit and always the conversation comes round to Bob—that's my brother—and Mother goes back to the days when he was a baby or at school and the things he used to do. And suddenly you realize it's all in the past tense as if she was talking about the dead.

ROSALIND. [*Listening intently.*] She wouldn't notice.

TONI. No. And the clock keeps striking hour after hour and nobody goes to bed because they can't sleep till they hear the bombers begin to come back. Then the first

comes and the counting begins again—one—two—three—four——

ROSALIND. [*Breathlessly.* Oh, Toni!

TONI. Last night they all came back. But the suspense . . . God! [*The other two stop what they are doing and look at her.*] It wasn't real. I felt I wasn't in a room at all. I was trying to hold a scene with something terrible going on offstage. And I got in a kind of panic . . . anybody got a cigarette? [*JUDY hands her lighted cigarette.* TONI *sits on stool* R. C.] And you know the first sort of gray light in the morning? [*ROSALIND nods.*] It's like that when he comes in. Not quite dawn and everything dead quiet and we hear the click of the gate . . . and you get a queer, eerie feeling—it's like a resurrection. The stone's rolled away and there are the women. [*TONI puffs away at her cigarette, a mass of nerves.* *Brushes hand across her eyes.*] It's hell, this war.

[*Brief pause.*]

JUDY. [*Edgily, getting up.*] Let's have a cup of coffee. [*Goes to door and shouts.*] Ge-ert! Gertie!

ROSALIND. [*To TONI.*] You just can't. It knocks everything else clean out of your mind.

[*GERT appears.*]

JUDY. [*To GERT.*] Is the canteen open?

GERT. No, there's nobody there yet.

JUDY. Well, nip over to the café and get us three cups of coffee. Very hot and very strong. [*Gives her money.* GERT *exits.*] Here you are.

TONI. We'll split it, Judy. [*Crosses to her table, sits.*]

JUDY. Oh, shurrup!

[*Enter VALERIE, looking rather unkempt.*]

VALERIE. [*Tired and peevishly.*] Is there a rehearsal? [*Sits at piano.*]

ROSALIND. We're waiting to hear.

VALERIE. Anyone got any aspirins? . . . I haven't slept a wink . . . the man beside me snored all night.

[ROSALIND gets aspirin from her table.]

JUDY. You should keep out of strange beds.

VALERIE. I wasn't in a bed. I was in the Tube.

TONI. What's it like down there?

VALERIE. Thick with dust and full of draughts.

ROSALIND. [*As she crosses U. L. to wash-basin to get glass of water.*] Noisy?

VALERIE. The trains are terrible. They go on till one and start again at four. Nearly drives you mad.

ROSALIND. Many people? [*Giving VALERIE aspirin and water.*] Here's some aspirin.

VALERIE. Thanks. Thousands and thousands—half London, the whole of Central Europe, Czechs, Poles, Hungarians —

JUDY. There'll be another European war breaking out down there shortly.

VALERIE. You can't get along Oxford Street—they're still putting out fires. And half Regent Street is roped off.

ROSALIND. [*Crossing to R. of piano. Leans on it.*] It seems crazy thinking of a rehearsal.

VALERIE. Where will the audience come from? Everybody's getting out. Streams of cars at Hyde Park Corner this morning loaded with bedding and canaries and things tied in bundles.

TONI. All right if you've got money.

VALERIE. I've got the jitters.

ROSALIND. Who hasn't? Lying all night with your head under the bedclothes and your ears feeling twice their size.

JUDY. I curl up. I think I've grown bristles on my back like a hedgehog.

TONI. It's the children that get me. I heard a little boy

say to his mother, "When the bombs begin to drop, may I hold your hand?"

JUDY. Poor little kid. . . . If it wasn't so damn grim it would make a lyric; "When the bombs begin to drop, may I hold your hand?"

TONI. Oh, shut up.

ROSALIND. It isn't the kind of war that lyrics come out of—it's too dirty.

JUDY. Yes, you look up at the sky when daylight's coming in and you feel as if lice have been crawling across it all night.

VALERIE. And you come up out of the Tube and you feel they've been crawling across you.

JUDY. They probably have—don't bring 'em in here.

[TOMMY *knocks, puts his head in.*]

TONI and ROSALIND. Hello, Tommy.

TOMMY. Hello! Everyone still alive? Where's Lila S.?

ROSALIND. In the office.

TOMMY. Is she going to rehearse?

ROSALIND. Wish we knew.

TOMMY. I'll go and find out.

ROSALIND. [*As he goes.*] Tommy—did you finish that number?

TOMMY. Yes. [*He takes folded paper out of pocket.*]

ROSALIND. [*Eagerly.*] Let me see.

[TOMMY *hands it to her and goes out as ROSALIND unfolds it and reads.*]

TONI. [*Laughing.*] Look at Rosalind! Blushing like a twelve-year-old. [*Gets up, looks over ROSALIND's shoulder. ROSALIND folds paper quickly. JUDY glances at her, bends over her knitting.*] Let's see it, Rosie—we all know Tommy's crazy about you.

VALERIE. [*Languidly rising, coming D. L.*] I thought it was Judy.

[ROSALIND looks at JUDY as if realizing something that had never occurred to her before.]

JUDY. [*Snapping at VALERIE.*] Funny—I always thought it was you.

VALERIE. [*Eyeing herself as usual in mirror at TONI's table.*] Me? Tommy couldn't keep me in cigarettes . . . I pick my men outside this dump.

JUDY. Which side of the street?

VALERIE. That's an insult. [*Crosses toward JUDY at c.*]

JUDY. I was only asking. They're a bob on one side and a pound on the other.

VALERIE. [*Advancing toward JUDY, then turns to others.*] Listen to her. Would you take that from anybody?

JUDY. [*Spinning her around.*] And you listen to me—in a few years' time your only chance of getting into a show will be that you know Tommy . . . Because he'll be right on top.

[*VALERIE languidly makes her way out.*]

VALERIE. [*With a shrug.*] Sorry I spoke . . . [*As she goes out.*] Better hide that letter, Rosalind . . . or whatever it is.

[*TONI goes D. L. to her table. JUDY goes to her table and sits, nearly crying.*]

ROSALIND. [*Embarrassed, crossing to her table.*] It's nothing, Judy. It's only a silly little rhyme.

JUDY. [*Nearly in tears.*] Who started this, anyway? Why does she have to come in here, anyway?

[*Enter GERT with coffee.*]

GERT. Hope you've got your own sugar?

ROSALIND. Haven't they given us any?

[*GERT hands JUDY the change.*]

GERT. Says she can't spare any.

TONI. The minute there isn't enough of anything shops begin to act as if they're God.

JUDY. [*Looking at her change.*] Is this all?

GERT. It was sevenpence a cup.

TONI. Sevenpence! Who charged sevenpence—that fat Anna?

GERT. Yes.

TONI. I'll show her. [*Turning angrily to others.*] There's men like my Ken being bombed and blasted to hell in their boats to bring this stuff in, and all it means to that fat Wop is that she can make a bit on the side. The hell with profiteers! Here, give it to me. [*She takes tray from GERT.*]

ROSALIND. You're going to take it back?

TONI. Sure. And tell her what she can do with it. [*Exit TONI.*]

GERT. [*To others.*] Anna's not a Wop.

JUDY. What is she, if she's not a Wop? That baby of hers is called Edda. Who but a Wop would call their baby Edda?

GERT. She says she's Free French. She's got a picture of De Gaulle hung up in her shop.

ROSALIND. Before that it was Mussolini. They've all got their alibi. [*To GERT.*] Is L. S. still in her office?

GERT. Yes. She's been shut in there for the last hour.

ROSALIND. Heard if we're going on?

GERT. [*Shakes head.*] Dunno. All the other theatres is shut—every one o' them. The Queen's was bombed last night—direct hit.

JUDY. First hit it's had for a *long* time!

GERT. A smash hit at that. The gallery's in the stalls.

JUDY. [*Gaily.*] That's the New Order boys. Up goes the stalls into the gallery. Down comes the gallery into the stalls.

ROSALIND. Pity it takes a bomb to do it.

JUDY. [*With a shrug.*] It can all be built again.

[*A terrific hubbub and shouting heard along the corridor. GERT runs out. TONI comes tearing in—ANNA after her, bedraggled and wet about the head. JUDY and ROSALIND try desperately to stand between ANNA and TONI.*]

ANNA. [*Shrilly—at C. TONI has reached her own dressing-table. JUDY and ROSALIND come C.*] I taka you to the pleece. I am soak from head to foot. [*To others.*] She throwa the coffee in my face.

TONI. Serves you right. Teach you not to do your profiteering tricks on us.

[*JUDY crosses to between ANNA and TONI.*]

ANNA. You low-class. You not weara da clothes. I—I not taka sauce from hussy like you. [*She tries to get at TONI. Others keep her back.*]

JUDY. Give us back the money—and scram.

ANNA. [*Fiercely.*] The money is mine. I tella the pleece she call me Wop.

TONI. So you are.

ANNA. [*Flying at TONI.*] I hava you arrest. I am Frenchwoman.

[*JUDY holds her back from TONI. ANNA slaps JUDY soundly on the face. JUDY flies into action, ROSALIND holding her back.*]

ROSALIND. Judy!

[*Enter TOMMY. Steps quickly between ANNA and JUDY.*]

TOMMY. [*Sharply, R. of ANNA.*] What's going on in here?

ANNA. [*Weeping.*] They calla me Wop. They ——

TOMMY. [*In same tone.*] Who called you a Wop?

ANNA. [*Weeping copiously, pointing at TONI.*] She did. I am Frenchwoman.

TOMMY. [*Kindly.*] Listen, Anna—don't take any notice. People's nerves are all on edge. We're unkind to each

other without meaning it. What does it matter if you're Italian or French?

[ANNA sobs, but more quietly.]

ANNA. [*Weeping.*] I cannot help that I am Italian.

TOMMY. [*With a smile, putting arm round her shoulder.*] Forgive us, Anna.

ANNA. [*Brokenly.*] I give you back the money.

JUDY. [*Gruffly.*] Oh, for Heaven's sake tell her to keep the money.

TOMMY. Come on back to the café and forget it. [TOMMY leads her out, still weeping.]

ANNA. [*At door, pathetically.*] Next time I charge fourpence. [ANNA makes her exit.]

TOMMY. [*Coming back c. to TONI.*] What did you want to set on that poor woman for?

TONI. [*Indignantly.*] Poor woman, my eye! Profiteering in coffee!

TOMMY. Well, she's probably having a tough time.

TONI. So are we all.

TOMMY. [*Turning to JUDY.*] Did she hurt you, Judy?

JUDY. [*At her table, rubbing her jaw.*] Dislocated my jaw, that's all.

TONI. Anyhow she admitted she was a Wop. [TONI turns to go out.]

TOMMY. I guess she's been scared stiff all night, same as the rest of us—Wop or not. And she's got a baby there . . .

TONI. [*Obstinately, at door.*] Called Edda. [TONI goes out.]

[TOMMY gives a laugh.]

ROSALIND. [*At her table, to TOMMY.*] Have you seen L. S. yet?

TOMMY. No. She's shut herself in the office.

JUDY. We're all waiting for the bad news.

TOMMY. She'd be crazy to carry on. The theatre's finished till all this is over.

JUDY. Who says?

TOMMY. [*With a slight smile.*] The big show's outside. The theatre can't hope to compete.

ROSALIND. But people will want to relax.

TOMMY. Not yet . . . they don't want to laugh either.

JUDY. The papers say everybody's cheerful.

TOMMY. [*Casually.*] Would you ever know from an English face how they felt? Or would you know from what they said? Remember Chesterton: "And a few men talked of freedom, while England talked of ale." That's all they're ever caught out talking about—ale.

ROSALIND. Not now. They've changed.

TOMMY. Yes. They're beginning to speak. They're getting a thrill out of the word Freedom that America got long ago. "It may be we shall rise the last, as Frenchmen rose the first. Our wrath come after Russia's wrath, and our wrath be the worst."

JUDY. [*Casually.*] I believe you're a Red.

TOMMY. [*Briefly.*] No. I'm not anything . . . [*Con conversationally, sitting at piano.*] I slept in the Tube last night.

ROSALIND. Is it terrible?

TOMMY. [*Quickly.*] It's like Hogarth. Like a Hogarth print of medieval London . . . the children might be some of Dickens' waifs.

JUDY. Poor little kids.

TOMMY. Funny to see children with gray hair.

ROSALIND. Gray?

TOMMY. With dust. And their shoes look as if they'd walked for miles along a dusty road.

JUDY. [*Getting up quickly.*] I don't want to think of it. I'm going up to see L. S.—you coming?

TOMMY. In a minute. [*JUDY goes without a word. TOMMY turns to ROSALIND.*] Did you get my note?

ROSALIND. Yes.

TOMMY. [*Rises, crosses to R. c.*] Well, what? . . . You see, Rosalind, I can't stand not knowing where you are at night.

ROSALIND. [*With a nervous laugh.*] But, darling, I'm where I always am . . . except that I'm in the basement instead of the third floor.

TOMMY. I know—but I don't know whether you're dead or alive. I hear the crash of the bombs and each might be falling on you.

ROSALIND. I'm as safe as anyone else. The basement's reinforced . . .

TOMMY. [*Crosses to her, hands on her shoulders.*] I want to be with you, so that if you go I go too.

ROSALIND. [*Jerkily.*] Tommy, I . . . I don't know what to say . . . how can we marry? . . . We might both be out of our jobs tomorrow.

TOMMY. That doesn't matter any more.

ROSALIND. [*Unhappily.*] Tommy . . . I . . . I don't know . . . I'm terribly fond of you, but . . .

TOMMY. But what?

ROSALIND. I don't want to be rushed into marriage . . . I want to think . . . I want to be sure.

TOMMY. Darling, listen, I swear I'll make you happy. I love you so much I couldn't fail to.

ROSALIND. [*Edgily.*] Let me think for a bit, Tommy. Don't force me into things . . . I'm edgy . . . it's this terrible noise at night.

[*Re-enter JUDY and TONI. TOMMY crosses U. to R. of JUDY's table.*]

JUDY. Attention, here comes Mamma Saddle.

[*TONI and JUDY cross D. L. TONI goes to mirror and tinkers with her hair.*]

ROSALIND. [*A little uncomfortably.*] Better prepare ourselves for the bad news.

[*Enter LILA SADDLE, with no little importance.*]

LILA. [*At c., looking round.*] Where's Valerie, Bubbles, and the girls?

TONI. In the canteen.

LILA. Call them, will you, Toni?

TONI. Sure. [*TONI runs out.*]

[*JUDY sits in chair at TONI's table.*]

LILA. [*Turns to ROSALIND and TOMMY.*] Well . . . we've decided to carry on—blitz or no blitz—that is, if you girls stand by.

TOMMY. [*U. R.*] I don't think you ought to ask them to stay on in London, L. S.

LILA. I can ask them—I can't force them. If we carry on or not depends on them, but if I know my girls, [*pats JUDY on head*] they'll stay.

TOMMY. Well, good luck to you, L. S.

LILA. They kept the theatres open through the Plague and the Great Fire and the Armada and Napoleon and every other bloody crisis—so what's the matter with *us*?

[*Enter the GIRLS.*] Oh, here you are . . . [*Crosses L., half sits on TONI's dressing-table. Girls group c. and L. of c.*] Well, girls, it's like this . . . I've made up my mind to keep open. [*A murmur from the GIRLS.*] Now wait a minute. You've had a week of the blitz. You've had your baptism of fire—you know what bombardment means—you know it can turn your insides to water—so it's up to you to say whether you can stick it or not.

JUDY. If one of us can stick it all of us can.

LILA. No, Judy. It must be a free choice. None of us will blame any girl who can't face it. God knows anybody who wants to leave London is entitled to.

ROSALIND. [*Rises, comes to R. c.*] I want to stay.

JUDY. Me, too.

TONI. And me.

ONE OF THE CHORUS. We'll all stay, Miss Saddle. We've been talking about it already. We don't want to run away.

[*General rejoicing. GIRLS gather around LILA. She embraces them, much laughing and ad lib. rejoicing.*]

LILA. Well, girls, my hat's off to you.

TOMMY. [*Smiling, coming down.*] And mine.

LILA. [*Crossing C. and slapping TOMMY on back.*] Tommy, my boy, this is theatrical history. The whole West End folds up except us. We were the first non-stop revue and we'll be the last. Nothing ever stopped us before. Competition couldn't stop us. Bad business couldn't stop us. The critics couldn't stop us—and now Mr. Hitler is not going to stop us. The only theatre in London standing up to Hitler. [*She dashes to phone.*] Gimme publicity. Geoff? It's on—we're all staying. Get on to the press and tell 'em to give us a bit of the space they used to give the highbrows. Tell 'em the Windmill Theatre keeps the flag flying through the blitz. The Windmill girls dance to the roar of the guns and sing to the whistle of the bombs—put it over big. [*She hangs up, but thinks of something else. Into phone again.*] Hey, Geoff, don't forget to mention we've lowered the prices of the seats. [*Hangs up. TOMMY laughs.*] Can't ask front-row prices. [*Coming down slightly.*] The regulars'll all have rushed off to the country—camouflaging themselves to look like trees or haystacks or something. Oh, and another thing, girls—I've fixed up a concert for some of the RAF boys on Sunday. Down at their camp—free.

VALERIE. Oh, another one of those "God bless you" shows.

LILA. One of the stations of the Bomber Command. It'll be grand for them boys and grand publicity.

JUDY. Where is it?

LILA. Very hush-hush. They just drive us there on a coach—they're putting us up for the night. [*Excited Oh's from the GIRLS. LILA, dryly.*] Don't get excited. [*Points to herself.*] The old watchdog's coming, too.

[*Tries to recollect something.*] There was something else . . . I'm going to fit up these basement rooms here with mattresses, because you can't go home in the blitz. Now let's get on with rehearsal.

[*At this moment the sirens begin to wail outside. All stand and listen, transfixed for a second.*]

BUBBLES. [*With signs of hysteria.*] O-o-oh!

ROSALIND. Bubbles! Stop it!

BUBBLES. I don't like the sound. I wish they had another kind of sound.

TONI. Oh, shurrup. You'll set everybody else off.

LILA. [*Taking BUBBLES by the shoulders.*] Listen, I'll write to the government and ask them to change it to "The Campbells Are Coming"—just for you, see? Now shut your mouth.

TONI. Let's have that new number.

LILA. Come on. We'll rehearse here. Quick!

[*The sound of the siren continues. Through the open window a man's voice through a megaphone comes up.*]

VOICE. Take cover! Take cover!

[*TOMMY plays and they all sing "Keep the Home Fires Burning," or some similar song.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE 1

At station of the Bomber Command, somewhere in England. An ante-room of a dining-hall where the concert has been held. It is of fair size and roughly built of wood—a glorified army hut. Dance tunes are being thumped out on a piano in the hall outside. The GIRLS are not in evening clothes. Dancing is proceeding in an adjoining room. At L. there is a bar with a bar-tender [DAISY] polishing glasses. There is an odd assortment of chairs—deck-chairs and wicker chairs, but all of them comfortable. A few wicker tables. A settee to R. of c. door. Above it is a large signed portrait of the King.

GROUP CAPTAIN *enters from hall with* PATSY.

CAPTAIN. I liked you in all of them. Of course I liked the others too, but I didn't notice them so much.

PATSY. [*Eagerly.*] Really?

CAPTAIN. You know how it is when you're watching a chorus. One girl stands out from the others and you find your eyes following her—just her—the whole time.

[*They stand at bar.*]

PATSY. [*Coyly.*] I wouldn't know, of course, but that's what they all say.

CAPTAIN. I suppose everyone tells you that?

PATSY. Not *everyone*. Most of them.

CAPTAIN. What will you drink?

PATSY. Oh, I don't know. I don't drink much . . . I'll have a brandy and ginger ale.

CAPTAIN. Have a double.

PATSY. [*Simpering.*] All right—just this once.

CAPTAIN. [*To DAISY.*] And a lager beer.

PATSY. Which number did you like best?

CAPTAIN. I liked them all. I think the Paris café sketch was the high spot.

PATSY. [*Rather chilly.*] I wasn't in that.

CAPTAIN. [*Hastily.*] Yes, you were! No? Oh, damn! Well, perhaps it wasn't so good. I tell you what I *did* like—the Tyrolean number . . .

PATSY. [*Eagerly.*] Oh, yes?

CAPTAIN. Where you knelt before the shrine on the mountain-side.

PATSY. I wore sixteen petticoats for that!—Who was that we were talking to in there?

CAPTAIN. Don't take any notice of him. He's a rear gunner. He's only just left school.

PATSY. Someone said it was very dangerous—being a rear gunner.

CAPTAIN. Well . . . er . . .

DAISY. [*Stolidly.*] Their prospect of life is in days.

CAPTAIN. [*Casually.*] Who the hell asked you to put in your word, Daisy? . . . [*To PATSY.*] Shall we dance again? [*Enter LILA, L. CAPTAIN, to her.*] I hope I'm remembering I'm host tonight?

LILA. You certainly are.

CAPTAIN. What will you drink, Miss Saddle?

LILA. Seeing it's you, I'll have a whisky and soda, though I'm not what you might call a drinker.

CAPTAIN. And a pink gin, Daisy.

LILA. You see, when you're in charge of a troupe of girls like mine you got to keep your head . . . [*Confidentially.*] I'm mother and father to these girls.

CAPTAIN. Pretty exacting job.

LILA. You got to put yourself on a pedestal and stay there—that's all. Here's how! [*They drink.*] You haven't had much in the entertainment line down here?

CAPTAIN. No. We left it to the War Office and they left it to Basil Dean.

LILA. He would send you *Hamlet* or something?

CAPTAIN. We never knew. The company got lost in the blackout . . .

LILA. God moves in a mysterious way, don't He? [*She drinks solemnly. Suddenly.*] You know, it's a treat for us to come down here. Lovely an' quiet an' peaceful—you don't know there's a war on, you folks.

[DAISY *gapes.*]

CAPTAIN. Well, sometimes we've a pretty shrewd idea, haven't we, Daisy?

LILA. You should come up to London for a night, you'd have ringside seats where we are. One of my stage-hands left to go into the army yesterday and the boys gave him a white feather. Funny war, isn't it?

CAPTAIN. Very funny.

LILA. Trouble is we never finished the last one. Too damn glad to see the last shot fired . . . but let 'em wait till the end of this one, by God! A man'll forget the pals he left out in France but he'll never forget having to bury all his children in one grave—that's the difference. I'll tell you something, my boy. [*She prods the CAPTAIN in the chest with her finger.*] England has grown up. After the last war it was a nation of adolescents. But look at it now, boy. It's a man stripped to the waist with the sweat and dirt pouring off his face. [*She finishes off her drink. Getting worked up.*] When he's time to look back he looks back on twenty-one rotten years. Mean and rotten and yellow. I hope to God nobody ever writes that story. I wouldn't like to see it in print.

CAPTAIN. Plenty will write it.

LILA. Boy, it'll read like the *Police Gazette*. [*Banging down her drink.*] Come on, I got to go and see to those girls of mine.

CAPTAIN. Another drink? A quick one.

LILA. [*Waving it away as she goes to c. door.*] No . . . no. Drink don't make me cheerful—it just makes me mad at everything. I got a bee in my bonnet about some things. I got a list of names in my head that I'd like to see strung up on Tyburn ——

[*They go out.*]

DAISY. [*To herself.*] Hear, hear! Me, too.

[*ROSALIND and PAUL LUNDY dance into the room. They stop and he continues to hold her in his arms. He is a tall, good-looking Squadron Leader of about 25.*]

PAUL. I don't want to let you go.

ROSALIND. Let's go back and dance, then.

PAUL. No.

ROSALIND. We can't stand here like this.

PAUL. Why not? There's only Daisy. [*To DAISY.*] You don't mind, do you, Daisy?

DAISY. Me? No. [*To PAUL.*] Say, where's Tyburn?

PAUL. You're a bit out. There hasn't been a Tyburn for a hundred years.

DAISY. Was it a prison?

PAUL. [*Interested only in ROSALIND.*] No. It's where they used to hang traitors—better watch out. [*PAUL still doesn't let ROSALIND go.*]

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] Do you mind if I sit down?

PAUL. Not if you sit on that couch where I can hold your hand.

[*ROSALIND looks at DAISY and laughs.*]

ROSALIND. [*To DAISY.*] I think he's behaving very badly, don't you?

DAISY. I'll look after you, Miss.

PAUL. Take a walk, Daisy. I'll mind your bar for you.

DAISY. I'll say you won't!

PAUL. All right, we'll ignore you. Give us two gin slings. [*They go over to couch and sit down. DAISY mixes*

drinks.] My plans have succeeded so well tonight I feel like Hitler.

ROSALIND. What plans?

PAUL. [*Grinning.*] Getting you down here—dancing with you—talking to you . . . I fixed it all.

[*DAISY brings drinks. ROSALIND is looking at PAUL.*]

ROSALIND. You fixed it?

PAUL. You see, a few nights ago in town—I saw you.

ROSALIND. In the theatre?

PAUL. We had the whole of the front row.

ROSALIND. I remember ——

PAUL. D'you remember me?

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] No!

PAUL. You ought to. If there's anything in telepathy you ought to. Because I sat there and concentrated on you.

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] We get used to that.

PAUL. [*Slowly.*] That—somehow—makes me angry.

ROSALIND. Why should it?

PAUL. You mean, what the hell business is it of mine? . . . [*He looks at her.*] I made you my business from the start.

ROSALIND. Your technique is bad.

PAUL. [*Smiling.*] Lousy. I never have time to learn.

[*He drinks; then turns to ROSALIND.*] When I was sitting that night in the theatre, I said to myself, "There's the girl I'm going to marry." I said, "This is a very important evening because I've just met my wife."

[*ROSALIND puts down her drink and stares at him.*] So I didn't come round to the stage-door with the other chaps . . . I walked round Trafalgar Square thinking up a plan. And, you see, it's all come right because here you are—sitting beside me.

ROSALIND. Not believing a word you say.

PAUL. I swear it's true.

ROSALIND. Is this so's you can all have a laugh when I

go . . . so's you can say to the others, "I led that girl on. I kidded her that ——"?

PAUL. Do I look like that to you?

ROSALIND. No.

PAUL. Well. [*They sit for a moment solemnly sipping their drinks.*] When I put my arm round you tonight to dance with you it was like an electric shock. I said to myself, "This is it!"

ROSALIND. Listen. I don't even know your name.

PAUL. [*Paying no heed.*] I could've shouted out loud . . . I knew I'd been right. Everything important should be sudden. Love should be sudden.

ROSALIND. Not so sudden as all this.

PAUL. Time's been telescoped—else I'd sent you flowers every morning. I'd have taken you out every night—I'd have splashed and strutted and shown you what a fine fellow I was . . .

ROSALIND. [*With slight smile.*] What are you doing now?

PAUL. Making the most of the brief moment I've got. Actually, I'm well rehearsed. I've said all this to you before. I've taken you over Germany with me, night after night. Your face rode ahead of me in the darkness . . .

[*ROSALIND is thoughtful. After a pause.*] So, you see, I know you quite well. [*He hands her a cigarette and lights it. ROSALIND looks serious and a little worried.*

PAUL, *quietly.*] I've no tricks, Rosalind. I tell you what I believe in—that love should be swift and that marriage should follow quickly, so that none of its first force is lost.

ROSALIND. [*Hesitantly.*] I think . . . I . . . probably . . . have always believed that, too.

[*TONI and VALERIE enter. They are laughing hilariously. They go toward bar.*]

VALERIE. Where did you hear that?

TONI. A friend of mine told me. It's true, too.

[PAUL and ROSALIND look at them vaguely. They are each occupied with their own thoughts.]

PAUL. [*Quietly to ROSALIND.*] Shall we dance again?

[ROSALIND gets up. They go out c., hand in hand. Neither seems to notice the others. TONI and VALERIE stare.]

TONI. [*To VALERIE.*] What's the matter with Rosalind?

VALERIE. Why?

TONI. She never even looked at us ——

VALERIE. Well, what do you know?

TONI. That's the Squadron Leader. Lundy's his name. He's one of the chaps who blew up the bridge at Maast-richt.

VALERIE. [*Dumb and vague.*] What did he do that for?

[DAISY looks at her: *Do they make them as dumb as this?*]

TONI. Gin slings, I think, Daisy, this time.

VALERIE. I prefer sloe gin. It doesn't go to my head so fast.

[DAISY starts to fix drinks. The dance is at an end. A chord is struck. The piano plays the first verse of "God Save the King." The GIRLS spring up at once. They turn their faces soberly toward the picture of the King and stand at attention to the last note. Immediately it is over they flop into their seats. DAISY brings the gins. Simultaneously the loud voice of the CAPTAIN is heard in the dance room.]

CAPTAIN. Now, boys, we want to thank Miss Saddle and the girls for the marvellous show they have given us to-night. We've had one of the most pleasant evenings . . .

TONI. [*Looking to door through which ROSALIND went.*] What's the matter with Rosalind?

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE 2

Dressing room, as before. Next afternoon. The room is empty but ROSALIND'S and JUDY'S clothes are lying about. GERT'S voice comes from the corridor outside.

GERT. Fifth number! Fifth number ready!

[TOMMY knocks and pops his head round door. Comes in, sits down—picks a paper off floor and glances at it. Lights cigarette. JUDY comes running in.]

JUDY. Hello, Tommy. [Comes c.]

TOMMY. Hello, Judy—how are things?

JUDY. Fine—we had a lovely night in the country—we had the whole wing of a country house to ourselves—they certainly did us well.

TOMMY. You look fine.

JUDY. [*Happily, goes to her table. Sits.*] I ought to. I had eight hours' sleep. Oh, it was lovely, Tommy. A whole night without being afraid—you just slept and slept.

TOMMY. How's Rosalind?

JUDY. [*Slight pause.*] She's all right.

[TONI dashes in.]

TONI. [*Hurriedly.*] Hello, Tommy. Judy, give me a splash of your hair lotion, there's a pal. [*She takes it and sprays her hair. Sings, u. c., just l. of JUDY'S table.*] I got a new number.

There was I
Thirty thousand feet up
Hanging on my straps
Upside down.
WHAT DID I DO?

TOMMY. Did you pick that up last night?

JUDY. Here, that's enough. You can't get that stuff any more. [*Takes the atomizer.*]

TONI. There's always spit. [*Starts to dash out.*]

TOMMY. Did you pick that up last night?

TONI. [*Winks.*] Wasn't the only thing I picked up either. Good-bye, duckie. [*TONI dashes out.*]

TOMMY. Seems you had a pretty good time.

JUDY. [*Smiling.*] All the girls made dates.

[*GERT puts head round door.*]

GERT. [*To JUDY.*] There's a phone call for Rosalind—will you tell her?

JUDY. Who is it?

GERT. Squadron-Leader Lundy—I'll switch it here.

JUDY. [*A second's pause.*] No. She'll take it in the office.

[*GERT goes.*]

TOMMY. [*With a smile.*] Rosalind, too?

JUDY. [*Quietly.*] You know how those boys are ——

TOMMY. [*Quietly, rises.*] Why did you tell her not to switch here?

JUDY. [*Casually.*] The office is nearer. [*Enter ROSALIND, singing gaily to herself, runs to her table. JUDY, at once.*] There's a call for you—in the office.

ROSALIND. Can't take it just now. Hello, Tommy.

JUDY. It's Lundy.

ROSALIND. Oh! [*She exits quickly.*]

[*TOMMY frowns and puffs at his cigarette. Sits at piano.*]

JUDY. [*Breaking into the silence somehow.*] How about that blitz number you were going to write?

TOMMY. Oh—er—[*coming back*] L. S. says to lay off anything touching on the war . . . Audiences want to

get away from it . . . we've got to get the escape mechanism going.

JUDY. Such as what?

TOMMY. Sweet romance. Simple—sentimental—nostalgic. Audiences are edgy—they've got to be soothed.

JUDY. Lullabies.

TOMMY. Something like that. Honeyed words.

JUDY. [*Rises, goes R. of piano. Talks to TOMMY over it.*] You're good with words. I like the words of your lyrics—they're slick and sophisticated and ——

TOMMY. Smart-alec. No good now. Sophistication collapsed when the first bomb fell—not before its time either . . . [*Suddenly turns to her.*] When you walk through the street these days, Judy, what do you feel like? Honest—without trying to be smart?

JUDY. [*Simply.*] I feel like crying all the time . . . inside me I *am* crying.

TOMMY. Tears come to your eyes for no reason . . .

JUDY. For plenty reason. The helpless sort of look of a house when it's lying sprawled across a street. Buildings you've known all your life battered to bits. Plenty reason, Tommy. [*Crosses R. to clothes-rail.*]

TOMMY. What would you like to hear when you come out of the streets into a theatre?

JUDY. [*Thinking.*] Something easy to listen to. Something—I think—that made you smile but not laugh. Something that didn't make much noise ——

TOMMY. If only we could write like they used to. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. He leadeth me beside the still waters." Simple words.

JUDY. Sure, that makes a picture of something you'd give your eyes for.

TOMMY. "He restoreth my soul ——" Talk about words, Judy. Say them to yourself after a night of bombing. The rich deep satisfaction of them. Like an anesthetic in the midst of pain.

JUDY. [*Goes behind screen.*] I'll try it tonight. That damn moon is full—they'll be over in masses.

TOMMY. [*Dreamily.*] "Though I walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death I will fear no evil"—how many thousand years since someone wrote that! Now we go into a huddle to think out our escape mechanism.

JUDY. [*From behind.*] Don't take much notice of L. S. and her roses round the door. Give 'em something warm and human and comforting—that's what they want.

TOMMY. M-m, we're feeling the cold—it's the chill of passing from one era into another.

JUDY. If you ask me, it's the sheer bloody fear of being clocked by a bomb.

TOMMY. [*With a laugh.*] I guess you're right too, Judy. [*ROSALIND returns, her eyes shining. She is there in the room but her mind is with PAUL. She stands still for a moment, R. C.*] What's the matter? Bad news?

ROSALIND. [*Absently.*] No . . . no . . . I was thinking.

JUDY. [*Tying her shoe.*] Tommy, how's this:

Clock my mother,
Clock my sister,
Clock my brother,
But don't clock me!

TOMMY. Immoral sentiments!

ROSALIND. I like it.

TOMMY. Strikes right at the root of the "Save Your Neighbor" campaign.

JUDY. [*Coming out.*] Rosie—my zip's got stuck. [*ROSALIND goes to help.*] Ouch—that's my skin.

ROSALIND. [*Laughing.*] Sorry!

JUDY. I tear myself to ribbons on the damn thing.

GERT. [*Outside.*] Sixth number—sixth number!

JUDY. [*Dashes out.*] Here I go —

[*ROSALIND crosses to piano. Talks to TOMMY over it.*]

ROSALIND. [*Suddenly.*] Tommy, I'm leaving the show.

[*TOMMY looks at her sharply.*]

TOMMY. Getting out of London, you mean?

ROSALIND. Yes.

TOMMY. Darling, I'm glad. Nobody is going to be able to stand this for long. I've always thought L. S. was crazy to carry on.

ROSALIND. [*Looking at him directly.*] It isn't because of the blitz . . . I'm not running away . . .

TOMMY. Another job?

ROSALIND. I'm getting married.

TOMMY. [*Bewildered.*] Getting married!

ROSALIND. I knew it was going to be difficult to tell you. I thought it was best to tell you direct without making a thing of it.

TOMMY. [*Painfully.*] But you've always told me there was no one else . . .

ROSALIND. There wasn't . . .

TOMMY. Well?

ROSALIND. Well, Tommy, I know this sounds dreadful, but I only met him last night.

TOMMY. [*Incredulously.*] Last night? . . . You're crazy.

ROSALIND. [*Quietly.*] Maybe . . . I don't think so.

[*TOMMY's hurt makes him angry and incredulous.*]

TOMMY. Is it this RAF fellow?

ROSALIND. Paul Lundy.

TOMMY. What is he thinking of? Is he mad? Is it some kind of joke? Because it isn't so funny.

ROSALIND. It isn't meant to be funny.

TOMMY. If it had been Bubbles . . . or Valerie . . . but you, Rosalind . . . with your sense. Tell the man not to be a bloody fool.

ROSALIND. [*Quietly.*] He isn't.

TOMMY. [*Rises.*] What else can he be? What responsible

man meets a girl and asks her straight away to marry him? Only the kind of moron who hangs around a stage-door.

ROSALIND. I don't have to justify him to you. He doesn't need it.

TOMMY. Was he tight?

ROSALIND. Would he have to be? [*Crosses R.*]

TOMMY. [*Follows her.*] Rosalind, don't let's quarrel about this. Just detach yourself for a minute—look at it from the outside ——

ROSALIND. Why should I? What it looks like from the outside doesn't interest me. I know—I know inside me that he's right and I'm right.

[*A brief silence.*]

TOMMY. Are you prepared to marry him on a few hours' acquaintance?

ROSALIND. Yes!

TOMMY. Just tell me this—*why* the hurry?

ROSALIND. There's a kind of limit on time.

TOMMY. Was that his line of argument?

ROSALIND. [*Sits at her table.*] He didn't have to argue. He talked—and I listened. He's like that. [*She smiles.*]

TOMMY. I guess he made a good case for himself.

ROSALIND. Tommy, don't be bitter—[*quietly*] I could see how his mind was working. A kind of resentment at being wiped out without a chance of living—or leaving a child ——

TOMMY. Did he say that?

ROSALIND. No, but I guessed it. I felt it. It was just there—something we both knew. [TOMMY *doesn't speak.*] I guess I'm setting myself up to be laughed at by telling you that.

TOMMY. [*Quietly.*] I'm not laughing.

ROSALIND. [*Emotionally.*] Tommy, it's the oddest thing that's happened to me. I don't know whether to laugh or cry. I'm all in pieces. He came into my life like . . .

TOMMY. Like Gabriel ——

ROSALIND. There's nothing like that about it. It's much more human . . . [*Laughing a little.*] Besides, Gabriel flew away again . . . She never saw him any more.

GERT. [*Outside.*] Seventh number. Seventh number ready!

[*ROSALIND gets up, takes a dress off rack and goes behind curtain to change. TOMMY crosses, sits at piano.*]

ROSALIND. Why can't we get all this straightened out, Tommy? Why do you have to worry about *me*, when you know how Judy adores you?

TOMMY. Oh, for God's sake, Rosalind! Do what you like—marry him if you want to. Go on, marry him—go away with him to a Dream Cottage—go and have fifty kids—only [*JUDY entering, TOMMY doesn't see her*] for God's sake don't keep on telling me that I've got to be in love with Judy!

[*JUDY exits quietly.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE 3

Dressing-room, as before. Same night. The blitz is on, good and heavy. The thunder of heavy gunfire and the shattering clump of bombs. The sounds are the same, so it is almost impossible to distinguish one from the other when both are going on. It is after midnight and the GIRLS are sitting or lying on their mattresses. They wear slacks and sweat-

ers. Their hair is tied up for the night in bright scarves or nets. ROSALIND is lying on her back with her arms behind her head, gazing at the ceiling. Some of the GIRLS are lying on their faces with pillows over their heads to keep out the noise. One girl is knitting. The following are on stage . . . ROSALIND, JUDY, TONI, VALERIE, JOAN, FRENCHIE, BUBBLES. The GIRLS are in the following order, from L. to R.: TONI, ROSALIND, JOAN, BUBBLES, FRENCHIE. JUDY is behind the screen.

TONI. [*To JOAN.*] You're crazy to knit with this going on.

JOAN. It steadies my nerves.

TONI. You might be thrown onto your needles and get them into your eye.

JOAN. [*Putting it down hastily.*] Oh, Lord, I never thought of that!

TONI. Stick 'em under your mattress or you might get 'em through somewhere worse.

[JOAN *does it.*]

VALERIE. [*Rising.*] Has anybody got any ear-plugs?

JOAN. It's better without them. You never know when to duck if your ears are plugged up.

VALERIE. I never know, anyhow. Guns and bombs sound the same.

JUDY. [*Coming from behind screen to c.*] The rule is—you hear a gun—you feel a bomb. When the walls look like coming in on you that's a bomb. When you walk across the floor and you feel you're crossing the channel in a rowing-boat that's bombs. [*Sardonically.*] If you suddenly seem to sprout wings and fly up a thousand feet into the air, you may take it for granted that *that's* a bomb.

TONI. That that *was* a bomb, you mean.

JUDY. Sure.

[VALERIE comes, sits beside TONI. She picks up piece of paper off TONI's pillow.]

VALERIE. What's this?

TONI. [*Trying to snatch it away.*] Something I wrote.

VALERIE. [*Up.*] I never knew you could write.

TONI. [*After her.*] I never knew you could read—gimme that.

VALERIE. [*Holding it out and reading aloud.*] "This is the last will and testament of Antonia Lloyd" . . .

TONI. [*Grabbing it.*] Gimme that, you silly little COW —

VALERIE. Toni's been writing her will. [*Crosses c.*]

TONI. You better write yours. Give the Maharajah back his ruby ring and give your Japanese pal his bracelet and send your Nazi boy-friend his swastika—unless you've hocked them already.

JOAN. Is that all he gave you—a swastika?

VALERIE. I don't know what you're talking about.

TONI. You told us you lived with him for a month.

JUDY. I guess his swastika was all he had left by the end of the month.

VALERIE. He was one of the richest men in Germany.

TONI. Whose money was it?

JUDY. Didn't he give you an Iron Cross? You certainly deserved it.

JOAN. [*Pointing up.*] Maybe he's one of them—up there now.

TONI. Pity we can't let him know Valerie's here so's he'd drop his bombs somewhere else.

JUDY. It might work just the other way round. We might get a direct hit.

TONI. My God, I never thought of that! [TONI folds up her will and puts it down her neck.]

JUDY. It's no good in there. Who's going to find a bit of paper if you're clocked?

BUBBLES. My sister came home from a shelter yesterday morning and found all that was left of her clothes blown up into a tree on the other side of the road. They were hanging there . . . like washing.

JOAN. Did she get 'em down?

BUBBLES. A fireman climbed up and brought her down a blouse and a brassiere—that's all there was.

FRENCHIE. I know a girl was in her bath and she went down through two floors in it.

JOAN. My landlady was in the lavatory and she had to be sawed out of it with a hacksaw—they took her to the hospital.

TONY. There's no privacy anywhere nowadays.

[Comes the whistle of a bomb. The GIRLS stiffen. Then some fall flat on their faces, some are too petrified to move. The crash comes—a table is knocked over. The dishes clatter on the floor. It passes and they sit up with a deep sigh. Some hold their hands to their hearts. Nobody speaks for a moment.]

JUDY. Phew! That was a near one.

TONI. Where would that be?

JUDY. About Piccadilly Circus.

TONI. That's so's they can say on their radio, "We penetrated into the heart of the City."

JUDY. Let 'em penetrate. They'll never plug it.

BUBBLES. *[In a thin kind of wail.]* I wish I was somewhere else!

JUDY. *[Sharply.]* You're not the only one! The whole of London is wishing that.

TONI. How about making a cup of tea?

JUDY. Sure—stop our teeth chattering.

TONI. Now you all owe me a teaspoonful each of your ration.

JUDY. I wish somebody could blackout that bloody moon.

TONI. From now on I'm off all songs that have the moon in them.

JUDY. Here's another! [*Sharply. Comes the whine and whistle of another and nearer bomb. The GIRLS stare at each other in terror, then all duck—flat on their mattresses, on the floor, wherever they are. Comes the crash. Nobody moves for a second. JUDY puts up her head first. In a whisper.*] God!

BUBBLES. [*In a thin high wail.*] O-oh-oh! We're all going to die!

[*FRENCHIE is on her knees with a rosary in her hands, and her lips moving.*]

ROSALIND. [*In frightened whisper.*] Judy—where was that?

JUDY. [*With a shaky laugh.*] I'd think it was on us except that we're still here.

ROSALIND. The floor heaved right up.

JUDY. What's that light through the grating?

ROSALIND. A pink glow—something's on fire.

[*A panic starts.*]

GIRLS. [*Together.*] { We're trapped!
The theatre's on fire!
Let us out! Let us out!

[*They stampede for the door, crying and panicking. They hang on the closed door. JUDY and ROSALIND stare at each other as LILA appears.*]

LILA. [*In a shout.*] Here, what's the matter? [*Shouting and holding them back.*] Get back, all of you! What the hell's the matter with you!

GIRLS. Fire! We're on fire!

LILA. Shut up! Shut up, all of you — [*They are somewhat quieter.*] There's no fire here! Stay where you are! [*More quietly.*] What the hell's the matter with you? [*There is no sound now but their sobbing. Sharply.*] A fine lot you are—behaving like lunatics! The fire's in

Swallow Street—it's just the glow of it that you see. Rosalind—you took a first-aid course, didn't you?

ROSALIND. Yes—and Judy.

LILA. You might be of some help—the café's had a direct hit.

GIRLS. The café!

LILA. You stay here. It's flat to the ground. Come on quick—bring the first-aid stuff [*to the others*] and no more of this carrying-on—what d'you think you are—a lot of Dagoes? [ROSALIND and JUDY *get first-aid outfit*.] Get over there—the dust hasn't cleared yet—I'll be over in a moment. [*Exit ROSALIND and JUDY. The other GIRLS are back down on the mattresses, LILA on her knees, c., her arms about the shoulders of two of the girls.*] Now listen here—you. Maybe you're scared. So's everybody. But if this is how you behave when you're scared you'd better get out of London quick and we'll shut down. It's the house opposite you that's been hit—not you—and there's not a cry coming from there.

[*The GIRLS have pulled themselves together.*]

TONI. [*Sullenly.*] We thought we were on fire.

LILA. [*Crisply.*] God help you if we had been—rushing for a door like a herd of cattle! Now listen. You've got something to live up to—we're the only theatre that's kept open—thanks to you. You're only girls, but you've proved yourselves good troupers. Now's your chance to show that you're good citizens. [*The GIRLS almost imperceptibly straighten themselves up. Conversationally.*] That So-and-so in Berlin's thinking he'll have us on our knees. [*Mildly.*] Well, we're an old and decadent democracy and we're a bit stiff in the joints . . . and we can't very well manage to get *down* on our knees . . . Well . . . So long . . . Blow your nose.

[*The GIRLS laugh a little as she goes.*]

TONI. Who started that panic anyhow?

BUBBLES. It was Rosalind said there was a fire.

TONI. And you started yelling . . . who lives above the café?

VALERIE. Anna and her husband and her baby ——

JOAN. And a whole lot of relations ——

[ROSALIND runs in. *She is covered with dust and her face is black.*]

ROSALIND. I want anything you've got for bandages—quick—scarfs—anything—tear something up—clean handkerchiefs —— [*She dives into her own suitcase—takes a nightie and tears it into strips. TONI helps her. As she works:*] There's no ambulance there yet—and you can't see—the dust's like a thick fog.

TONI. Many hurt?

ROSALIND. They've got two out of the wreckage—they say there's ten more in it.

TONI. Anna?

ROSALIND. Haven't seen her.

TONI. [*Distressed.*] I called her a Wop!

ROSALIND. Never mind—gimme a drink of water—gimme those—get some more ready in case we need them.

[TONI dashes to get some water. ROSALIND gulps it down—runs out.]

BUBBLES. [*To TONI.*] Are there people buried in it?

TONI. Ten.

BUBBLES. [*Twisting her hands nervously.*] I'd rather be killed outright than buried . . . [*She walks away and sits down on a mattress as if she were sick.*] I wish I could get away.

TONI. [*With a short laugh.*] Where to?

BUBBLES. Somewhere safe.

TONI. No place is safe. No place in the whole world's safe.

BUBBLES. America.

TONI. Look at the water you got to cross before you get there.

BUBBLES. You feel so shut in. You feel Britain's just the size it looks in a map and you're a rat in a cage.

TONI. Not a rat—the rats have left—I'm going to make that tea. [*She gets up and gets the Primus stove going. She fills a kettle with water from a sink and sets it on to boil.*]

FRENCHIE. Can't somebody play something? If we sing we might feel better.

BUBBLES. What is there to sing about? Listen . . . here's another wave of them. [*She crawls to her mattress and puts pillow over her head.*]

TONI. Plenty of time to sing when we get dished out with harps.

VALERIE. Let's sing "There'll Always Be an England."

TONI. I hate that song. Sounds as if you thought there wouldn't be.

BUBBLES. Let's sing something people sang when they were happy.

TONI. When was that?

BUBBLES. Before all this started.

[*TONI sits down at piano and begins to play "Lambeth Walk."* Gradually the GIRLS join in—singing softly, rather thoughtfully, some of them merely humming. In the middle of it JUDY comes in slowly. No one notices her at first. She is smothered in dust—her hands are bleeding. She looks shattered and horror-stricken. The singing continues. The first to notice her is TONI, who is making tea at the other end of the room. She stares at JUDY. One of the girls follows the direction of her eyes and stops singing—the singing trails off as they see JUDY.]

TONI. Judy! Judy! What is it? [*TONI stops her tea-making and goes over. JUDY waves her away with a vague, impotent gesture of her hand. JUDY collapses in*

a faint on her mattress. TONI, down on her knees beside JUDY.] Judy! Judy! [To the others.] She's fainted. Get some water. Go and ask one of the men if they've any brandy.

[JOAN runs out. A bomb drops and shakes the shelter. VALERIE, TONI and BUBBLES, who is crying, lift JUDY onto a mattress.]

VALERIE. Raise her feet . . . *[To one of the girls.]* Get that bottle of eau-de-cologne out of my case.

[BUBBLES brings it. She pours it on a handkerchief and holds it to JUDY's forehead.]

TONI. Her hands are bleeding . . . get me a sponge and a basin of water—take the water for the tea.

[FRENCHIE pours water into a basin.]

VALERIE. They're all cut and scratched. *[They sponge her hands.]* She's coming round.

[GERT runs in with some brandy—she is covered with dust too.]

GERT. Here's some brandy—is she all right?

[TONI lifts her head and gives her brandy. JUDY coughs. JOAN enters.]

TONI. *[To GERT.]* Was she hurt?

GERT. *[Quietly—she is shaken too.]* No . . . it was what she saw. *[GERT starts to go out.]*

TONI. *[Quietly.]* What?

[GERT walks away, is full up—can't speak.]

JUDY. *[Plaintively.]* Anna, Toni.

TONI. Sh-sh-sh. Don't think about it, Judy. *[ROSALIND comes in. Her face is white under the dust stains. Her movements are slow—her mind seems far away. She*

looks at JUDY. TONI, *quietly.*] Can any of us help, Rosalind?

[ROSALIND *shakes her head.*]

ROSALIND. [*Dazed.*] The rescue parties are there now—and the ambulances.

TONI. You—are you all right?

ROSALIND. Except that I'm sick—sick at my stomach . . . [*She goes over to her mattress and lies on it, face downwards.*]

JUDY. Toni, Anna!

TONI. Hush, Judy.

[JUDY *sits up wildly.*]

JUDY. [*Sobbing wildly.*] They were crushed under a girder—both of them—she had her baby in her arms. Sweet God! They might have been beetles! [*Looks up. She is sobbing hysterically.*] Oh, God, what the hell do you care up there if your people die!

TONI. Hush, Judy.

JUDY. I won't hush. He's handed over His sky to the killers. They strike us before we're ready. [*She turns and throws herself down on bed, weeping, but more quietly.*] Oh, God, why weren't we ready when all this started?

TONI. Hush, Judy.

ROSALIND. [*Wearily, from her pillow.*] Put the lights out, somebody. [*JOAN switches them off. There is complete darkness and silence except for JUDY's muffled weeping.*]

TONI. We never had our tea . . .

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE 1

Scene is the same. Next morning. Stage is empty. The mattresses are piled up D. L. The phone is ringing. LILA is on stage.

GERT. [*Running in.*] Miss Saddle! Miss Saddle!

LILA. I'm here, Gert.

GERT. [*Takes up phone. Talks into it.*] She's down here, chief.

LILA. Thanks, Gert.

[*GERT hands her phone.*]

LILA. Hello, Geoff. No, it's me, Geoff. She ain't here yet—she's having last night's dust washed out of her hair . . . you leave it to me, old boy, I'll talk her out of this crazy nonsense . . . have you got on to any of the press yet? . . . Yes, sure, you know the line to take—show-girls tear up their clothes to make bandages for bomb victims—no, it's a good story. Rosalind and Judy were in among that wreckage before the dust had cleared away, and by God, they worked like slaves. You should see Judy's hands this morning—cut to ribbons! See here, Geoff, if any reporters ring up put 'em on to me. Business ain't so hot that we can hold back on anything—I'll give 'em the story. [*She rings off. As she is talking, JUDY enters. She comes R. c., sits on chair. She wears slacks and a sweater—her hands are bandaged.*] What you want to do is take a walk in the park.

JUDY. What would I walk for? I never walk.

LILA. Get some fresh air.

JUDY. I can open the window. [*She opens it, crosses, lies on pile of mattresses.*] Is it true you saved some horses out of the fire last night?

LILA. [*With a laugh, coming D. C.*] They were leaving the poor devils in there to burn—and horses cost money these days—so me and a man got 'em out, there was six of 'em . . . I had to laugh . . . me that doesn't know one end of a horse from the other.

JUDY. What did you do with them?

LILA. [*Laughing.*] I didn't know what the hell to do with 'em. I had them on my hands. I tried to sneak away and they followed me. I didn't know what to say to them except "H up!" [*JUDY laughs.*] So I took 'em to the police station in Vine Street—same as if they was drunks or something.

JUDY. You're lucky they didn't pinch *you*.

LILA. I felt like I had the D.T.'s. Three o'clock in the morning and there wasn't a soul in the streets but me—with these six Boris Karloffs stalking behind me. [*JUDY laughs.*] What does the doctor say about your hands? [*LILA sits on mattresses, R. of JUDY.*]

JUDY. [*Casually.*] They're all right . . . I'll keep the bandages on between shows.

LILA. I want to talk to Rosalind. When she comes in here will you leave us alone for a bit?

JUDY. Sure! You won't do any good.

LILA. [*Impatiently.*] She met him Sunday night and this is Tuesday morning, and she only seen him a couple of hours at that . . . she can't expect people to take it serious.

JUDY. She doesn't care.

LILA. Well, what is it? What's that guy got? He looked just like anybody else to me.

JUDY. I guess it's Rosalind's destiny—she can't escape it.

LILA. Destiny . . . say, what are you, a Spiritualist or something?

JUDY. Me—I'm not anything.

LILA. You got guts anyhow. You did something last night—you tore into that stuff with your hands when a man would have waited for a pick and shovel. I reckon you got a good mark against your name in the book the Old Boy keeps up there, Judy.

JUDY. [*Smiling slightly.*] Guess He gets pretty tired writing in it these days.

[*Enter ROSALIND. Crosses D. R. to her dressing-table. Her hair has just been set and she wears it in a net.*]

ROSALIND. Hello—is there a rehearsal on?

LILA. [*Gets up, crosses to R. C.*] I cut it out today—none of you had enough sleep. Better take all the sleep you can during the day—doesn't look like we're going to get much at nights.

JUDY. I'm going up to the canteen for some coffee.

ROSALIND. Wait for me.

LILA. Just a minute, Rosalind. [*LILA catches ROSALIND as she passes. JUDY goes out.*] I've been thinking—there's nothing against you marrying, Rosalind—but what I can't see is why you have to leave the show?

ROSALIND. What's the use of marrying if he's down there and I'm in London?

LILA. You could see him week-ends—Sundays.

[*ROSALIND shakes head.*]

ROSALIND. We don't want that kind of marriage.

LILA. You can't settle down—you can't have a home.

ROSALIND. [*With a smile.*] My home will be a room—wherever he's stationed.

LILA. Has he any money?

ROSALIND. Only his pay.

LILA. Less than you're earning yourself.

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] Much less.

LILA. [*Sits R. C.*] I was a fool to fix up that show for those boys.

ROSALIND. [*Crosses L. C., eyes twinkling.*] You didn't fix it, darling.

LILA. [*Aggressively.*] I didn't?

ROSALIND. No! He did.

LILA. So it was *him* that rang me up! So polite. God's teeth—if I'd known I'd have told him to get through to Basil Dean . . . he'd have sent him *King Lear* or the Russian Ballet, then he'd have had a fifty-year-old dying swan or else some clumping English rose. [ROSALIND *laughs.*] What's got into you? You're the only young star that's risen in the West End since the war. Think what your future's going to be when all this is over' [ROSALIND *shrugs.*] You've never had a taste of it. You've only known the theatre in wartime. But you'll have everything . . .

ROSALIND. [*Crosses to her.*] Listen, Lila. When all this is over those of us who are lucky will have their lives—and that'll be plenty.

LILA. Sure, but we ain't going to be content with that for long.

ROSALIND. Maybe we'll find a new kind of content. We'll walk in the park. And there'll be flowers instead of guns. And the children will come back and play in the streets again . . .

LILA. And people will be crowding into the theatres and where'll you be?

ROSALIND. [*Laughing.*] Maybe I'll be bringing back a child to play in the streets.

LILA. Who put all this into your head?

ROSALIND. He did.

LILA. What kind of primitive guy is he?

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] He just sees straight. He thinks straight.

LILA. He doesn't think of you.

ROSALIND. Of me?

LILA. If he lands you with a child—maybe to come into the world with him not there.

ROSALIND. [*Smiling gently.*] He'll be there. If he's alive nothing would keep him away. If he's dead he'll be there.

LILA. [*After a pause.*] Something's got into you that I don't understand.

ROSALIND. My dear, sweet Lila, it's terribly simple.

LILA. [*Phone rings. LILA picks it up. ROSALIND crosses, lies on mattresses.*] Hello, yes. Sure. What paper's he from? That's fine, Geoff. I'll be right up. You let me do the talking—I'll give him a swell story . . . that's all we want . . . any kind of publicity is better than none . . . [*Impatiently.*] No, I know we can't mention where the bombs fell, but everybody knows . . . I'll be up. [*Rings off and goes toward door.*]

ROSALIND. [*Suspiciously.*] Is that a reporter?

LILA. From the *Express*—seems he must have heard about you girls last night . . .

ROSALIND. You don't want publicity out of what happened in the café . . . ?

LILA. [*Vaguely.*] No . . . no . . . no, nothing like that. But you've got to help these boys out with a bit of news if there is any . . . fair's fair. [*Exit LILA.*]

[*MRS. GOOD comes in, carrying a large trash-can.*]

MRS. GOOD. [*Starts emptying waste-baskets into can.*] Terrible night you had here, Miss.

ROSALIND. Yes. What was it like with you, Mrs. Good?

MRS. GOOD. Oh, we don't half get it bad. They're trying to get the power station, see, and they miss it [*Touches wood.*] but they get us. Then they go back and tell over the radio how they left the power house in flames . . . we have to laugh. 'Tain't funny but we have to laugh . . . I always say you're crying one minute and laughing the next.

ROSALIND. Is your house all right?

MRS. GOOD. Well—it's still there. [*She touches wood three times.*] We've got a tarpaulin for a roof and we

got no windows, of course, but we're lucky . . . my daughter's had a terrible time . . .

ROSALIND. Is she down there, too?

MRS. GOOD. [*Comes c.*] She was. But she went into St. Michael's to have her baby and it was bombed the night she was having it . . . Saturday night.

ROSALIND. [*Shocked.*] Oh . . . My God!

MRS. GOOD. She's only eighteen and it's her first baby and her husband's in the army. And I always say it's a bad enough shock for a girl of her age having a first baby without having more on top of it.

ROSALIND. What happened?

MRS. GOOD. The wing next to hers got a direct hit when she was in the middle of her pains—and the blast threw her out of bed—and of course the doctors and nurses was all helping to get people out of the ruins—an' my little gel she crawled under her bed an' she lay there an' there her baby was born—under the bed an' her all alone.

ROSALIND. Did it live?

MRS. GOOD. [*Smiling.*] Live? He's a lovely baby. My gel says to me, "Mum, *you* know I'm not brave"—she's always been kinda scared of the dark and things like that—"but, mum," she says, "something just took hold of me that night an' I never lost my head an' I never cried out" . . . and yesterday I went to see her an' took her some roses that one of the girls gave me, and you know, Miss, it ain't funny—God knows it ain't funny at all—but we had a good laugh about her being thrown out of her bed. [*She continues her dusting vigorously while ROSALIND watches her.*]

[ROSALIND is thinking. JUDY comes in, carrying cup of coffee.]

JUDY. [*Gives coffee to ROSALIND.*] Here you are—it's hellish cold up there in the canteen. [*Crosses to ROSALIND's table.*]

ROSALIND. Oh, thanks, Judy.

MRS. GOOD. [*To JUDY.*] What've you done to your hands, for Gawd's sake?

JUDY. [*Chuckling her under the chin.*] Playing with fire, Goody.

MRS. GOOD. [*Picking up trash-can.*] Tch-tch-tch-tch.

ROSALIND. [*Crossing C. to MRS. GOOD as she is going out.*] When're you going to see your daughter again, Mrs. Good?

MRS. GOOD. Soon's I finish here.

ROSALIND. [*Pressing something into her hand.*] Take something for the baby from me.

MRS. GOOD. [*Protesting.*] Oh, Miss, you shouldn't've gone an' done that . . . she don't want nothing . . . she . . .

JUDY. [*Mischievously.*] And we'll watch you till you pass the Jug and Bottle on the corner . . .

MRS. GOOD. Oh! Miss, I'd never touch it.

JUDY. You'd never pass it . . . you old so-and-so.

[*Exit MRS. GOOD, chuckling, as GERT comes in with a telegram for ROSALIND. MRS. GOOD hangs round in entrance as ROSALIND tears it open.*]

MRS. GOOD. I never like them things—specially nowadays. [*ROSALIND reads it and her face lights up.*] 'Tain't bad news anyhow . . . [*To GERT.*] Where's the key of them cloakrooms—how d'you think I'm going to clean 'em if I can't get in?

GERT. It's hanging up—where it always hangs—never can see anything—you can't.

[*They go out, arguing.*]

ROSALIND. [*On mattress, D. L., to JUDY.*] It's from Paul—he's coming up this evening—[*laughing*] and, Judy, he sends it reply-paid to know if I'm all right.

[*TONI enters, crossing D. L. to her dressing-table.*]

TONI. Hello ——

JUDY. Hello, Toni.

ROSALIND. He was over Germany last night, because he rang me before he left—I should be sending him wires to know if *he's* all right.

JUDY. [*Comes over, sits on mattresses, R. of ROSALIND.*] I guess you came as near to it last night as he did.

ROSALIND. Maybe, but it doesn't seem the same ——

TONI. [*At table.*] I had a wire from Ken to know if I was O. K.—and I'd been crying my eyes out 'cause I got a letter from him that had been soaked in salt water as if he'd been swimming around with it on him—and there he was worrying about *me*.

JUDY. It's a crazy way people have to live.

TONI. [*Sits on mattresses, L. of ROSALIND.*] If anybody had told you a year ago that you could live like this from day to day and have the guts scared out of you every night as well, you'd have said me for the gas oven, wouldn't you?

ROSALIND. Mrs. Good says "you have to laugh."

TONI. It's true too—you have to laugh. If somebody was to tell you that this was your last day, I guess you'd just do the same things you do any other day . . .
[TONI *powders her face.*]

JUDY. I wouldn't.

ROSALIND. I wouldn't either—I'd go and get married to Paul.

TONI. I couldn't go to Ken 'cause I never know where he is ——

JUDY. I'd go and get plastered.

ROSALIND. Talking about getting plastered, have you seen Tommy this morning?

JUDY. [*Sharply.*] No—is he here?

TONI. I met him as I came in—he isn't exactly plastered, but he's lit.

ROSALIND. [*Worried.*] What on earth does he go and do that for?

TONI. He thinks too much. Everybody's troubles are his troubles. The things that only scratch the rest of us go deep into Tommy—though I don't see what good it does him to go and get lit.—Are you two coming out to lunch?

ROSALIND. I am: I'm hungry. [*Gets up.*]

TONI. I could eat a horse.

JUDY. That's probably just what you'll get.

TONI. So long as we don't know—come on. [*Starts out.*]

JUDY. You two go—I've got to write home ——

ROSALIND. Oh, come on, Judy.

JUDY. No—I got to write them. My Dad's yelling out about the installments on the furniture—last week it was the rent.

ROSALIND. Don't they know you're on wartime pay?

JUDY. They've never heard of the war. They're in Dublin.

TONI. I'd disinherit them. Tell 'em you can't write on account of your hands.

JUDY. [*Looking at her hands.*] That's an idea.

[*Enter TOMMY—slightly lit. JUDY puts her hands quickly behind her back.*]

TONI. Here's Tommy—coming out to lunch?

TOMMY. Too early. Much too early. [*Comes D. C.*]

TONI. Well, look at the time we've got to be back—come on, Rose.

ROSALIND. You coming, Judy? You know you can't write that letter.

JUDY. Tommy'll do it for me.

ROSALIND. O. K. . . . If you change your mind we'll be at Lyon's.

[*TONI and ROSALIND go out.*]

TOMMY. What letter? [*Crosses L. to JUDY.*]

JUDY. It doesn't matter.

TOMMY. [*Producing flask out of his pocket.*] Have a drink, Judy?

[JUDY shakes her head.]

JUDY. Since when have you taken to carrying it round with you?

TOMMY. [*Smiling.*] You never know who might need it.

JUDY. A lot of use it'll be if it's empty. [TOMMY takes drink. JUDY watches him.] That is no way out of your troubles, Tommy.

TOMMY. [*Smiling, gets chair, brings it over and sits facing JUDY.*] I've no troubles—none at all.

JUDY. You'll have plenty if L. S. sees you. You'll be out on your ear with no job and every theatre in London shut down. Then what'll you do?

TOMMY. [*Still smiling.*] I can sweep the streets. I can sweep up the broken glass and wipe the blood from the pavements.

JUDY. You'd be so dramatic about it you wouldn't last five minutes. Every ruin you saw you'd want to put on sackcloth and ashes and sit in the middle of it. What you should be doing, you should be turning out songs to cheer people up.

TOMMY. [*With the same fixed smile on face.*] "I will sing a new song," said the poet. "Then get down into the cities and hearken," they told him. And the poet went into the cities and listened—and he came back and said: "I have heard them and I will sing no more." [*He takes a swig at flask again.*]

JUDY. Put that stuff away and snap out of it. [TOMMY takes no notice. Earnestly.] Listen, Tommy—if you carry on like this you'll be flat out by night when the blitz starts again. Nobody's any right to get plastered in London just now—you need all your wits and all your strength.

TOMMY. What have you done to your hands?

JUDY. [*Crisp and matter-of-fact.*] I got them bloody

well cut to ribbons across the street last night—and it's more than you'll be able to do if you're needed.

TOMMY. [*Distressed.*] Judy!

JUDY. What of it? . . . A kid of five got its eyes blown out.

TOMMY. [*After a pause.*] Christ! [*He gets up and walks around the room.*] Christ . . . this filthy world! I don't like the world, Judy . . . [*Speaks deliberately.*]

JUDY. You'll like it again . . . Raise yourself up, Tommy. We're doing something for the world of men by just getting on with our jobs in a bombed city. Think of the thousands and thousands who've fled from every city in Europe. Nobody's blaming them, but in the end everybody's got to dig their heels in and clench their fists and just stand still.

TOMMY. [*Obstinately.*] I hate it.

JUDY. Look beyond it. It's the only way to go through it.

TOMMY. To what?

JUDY. To what—how can you say that, Tommy? How can you live in this town and doubt the future? London's humbled and suffering, but the people know inside them there's something terrific happening to their hearts and minds. Their eyes are opening . . .

TOMMY. But a child's eyes are blown out. [*Sits again.*]

JUDY. Don't brood on that—it died. [*There is a silence between them. JUDY'S face is set and sombre. TOMMY rubs his forehead roughly with his hand.*] Tommy, I'm going to tell you something: whoever wins this war the victory goes to the people who stood still.

TOMMY. You talk like a revivalist.

JUDY. [*Passionately.*] Oh, Tommy, Tommy! [*Upon her knees.*] Well, you can't get me down. I'm waiting for the day when the "All clear" will sound out over London for the last time—because, by God, it'll be the most triumphant sound any city has ever heard!

TOMMY. How many of us will be left to hear it?

JUDY. Well, what the hell! If we're not we'll hear it from the other side, and sound our trumpets. We'll hear it from the clouds or wherever we are, and we'll join in. We'll shout down to London and tell them to build up their ruins—and we'll watch them rise.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE 2

SCENE: *The same, 8 o'clock at night. The blitz is on with the whole orchestra of gunfire—fire-engine bells—ambulance sirens, etc. The show at the Windmill is also on. Just before the curtain rises, there is a loud and bloodcurdling shriek. Curtain goes up. VALERIE is crouched on top of the mattresses, shrieking, terror on her face. TONI stands looking at her with exasperation.*

VALERIE. I tell you it is. I *saw* it.

TONI. [*At JUDY's table.*] You make me bloody well tired.

[*Enter ROSALIND, hurriedly.*]

ROSALIND. [U. C.] Whatever's the matter? I thought at least someone had been hit by a bomb.

VALERIE. Bomb, my foot! It's a rodent! Under there . . .

TONI. A what!

VALERIE. A rodent!

TONI. You mean a mouse.

VALERIE. Well! A large-sized mouse.

TONI. [*Crossing L. to VALERIE.*] If you didn't sneak in here and use our make-up you wouldn't see any mice . . . [*Drags VALERIE down.*] Go on! Buzz off!

[ROSALIND crosses D. R. to her dressing-table.]

VALERIE. [*Going.*] I don't know why you're always so beastly about it . . . I *did* see a—[TONI makes threatening gesture] one. [*She goes.*]

GERT. [*At the same time; off-stage, calling.*] Number eighteen! All up for number eighteen . . . [GERT enters.] There's someone at the stage-door for you, Miss Toni.

TONI. For me?

GERT. Yes, Miss, you'd better hurry.

[TONI goes.]

ROSALIND. Gert, couldn't one of the carpenters put up a shutter or something at that window? If the glass is blown in it's going to go all over us.

GERT. I'll see. I'll ask them. Reckon the glass won't be there long anyhow.

ROSALIND. I don't want it stuck in my face . . . what's the booking like for the second house?

GERT. It's pretty good, L. S. says.

ROSALIND. I can't think who comes out in this.

GERT. Troops on leave mostly. They've nowhere else to go . . . and I reckon they're used to it by now.

ROSALIND. Does it scare you, Gertie?

GERT. Well, Miss, I can't say I like it. But I kinda got my second wind.

ROSALIND. You do, don't you? . . . I say, if I'm on when Squadron Leader Lundy comes, will you bring him in here and give him an evening paper?

GERT. Sure.

ROSALIND. And could you get me something to eat in the interval—sandwiches—and I think a bottle of champagne?

GERT. Champagne! They'll have a fit if I ask for that in the pub.

ROSALIND. I feel like it tonight.

GERT. Celebration?

ROSALIND. That's right. Here's the money.

GERT. And a couple of glasses?

ROSALIND. And one for Judy—and Tommy, if he comes in.

GERT. [*Smiling.*] He'll come in if there's champagne around.

ROSALIND. Tell him.

GERT. Sure—it's your number. [GERT goes.]

[*Enter TONI, half-laughing, half-crying.*]

TONI. [U. c., *holding out a paper.*] Darling, look at this! Look what I've got.

ROSALIND. [*Goes to her.*] What is it? A summons for the rent?

TONI. No, divorce papers! . . . Ken's wife . . . She's done it after all! . . . I'm a co-respondent! [*She dives into ROSALIND's arms.*]

ROSALIND. Oh, Toni, how wonderful!

TONI. We'll be able to be married!

ROSALIND. Where'd you get it?

TONI. From a little man at the stage-door. He had a piece of shrapnel through his hat. . . . [*Imitates.*] "Are you Miss Antonia Lloyd? Then take *this!*"

GERT. [*Entering.*] Go on now, or you'll be late. [ROSALIND *exits.*] Did you see that little man, Miss?

TONI. Did I! I fell in love with him and I'm going to give him my best autographed picture. [*She goes to dressing-table, gets picture and exits quickly.*]

[GERT, D. R., *tries to fit piece of cardboard over window. Enter JUDY, singing gaily.*]

JUDY. [*Stands in front of GERT with hands on hips—sings.*]

Are you the O'Reilly that keeps this hotel?

Are you the O'Reilly they speak of so well?

Cos if you're the O'Reilly they speaks of so highly,
Gor-blimey, O'Reilly, you are looking well.

[*Goes to her dressing-table. Sits.*]

GERT. [*Cheekily.*] You're not looking half bad yourself.

JUDY. [*Gaily.*] There's a Canadian in the front row thinks a lot of me. He can hardly keep his seat. [*Listening to the guns.*] Listen to the orchestra—all tuned up for the big show.

GERT. Rosalind's boy friend is coming. I've got to bring in a bottle of champagne at the interval.

JUDY. How many glasses?

GERT. One for you.

JUDY. That's all I want to know.

[*A knock on door. JUDY shouts, "Come in." Enter PAUL, rather shyly. Stops in entrance.*]

PAUL. I say—is—this . . . ?

JUDY. Sure, this is Rosalind's. I'm her stable mate.

GERT. [*Crosses U. C., just L. of JUDY's dressing-table.*] She said I was to see you had everything you wanted.

JUDY. He has. You can scram. Come in, Paul.

[*GERT exits.*]

PAUL. Thanks. I thought the theatre would be shut.

JUDY. Why?

PAUL. With those goings-on outside.

JUDY. We've got a packed house—well, not exactly packed, but half full.

PAUL. I don't know how you carry on . . . it scares me to death.

JUDY. You!

PAUL. [*Laughing.*] It terrifies me. I feel much safer in the air than down here.

JUDY. That's funny . . . how's Germany looking?

PAUL. Fine!

JUDY. When are the boys going to bomb Berchtesgaden?

PAUL. [*Sits on mattress.*] What's the use? Schickelgruber's got a hole under a mountain.

JUDY. Bomb the mountain, then, and how about dropping one down Vesuvius? That would start something. You got no imagination.

PAUL. [*Smiling.*] Imagination's not for us.

JUDY. No, I guess not. What do you think about when you're on those long flights in the dark?

PAUL. We don't think—mostly we sing risqué songs.

JUDY. I wonder if *they* do—up there?

PAUL. They're more likely to sing "Deutschland Uber Alles" . . . This is a war between people who can laugh and people who can't. From what I've seen of them, they couldn't relax enough to sing anything else.

JUDY. Is it true what they say about them?

PAUL. What do they say?

JUDY. That they're all in love with Hitler.

PAUL. [*With a shrug.*] I wouldn't know. They look more like the Dead End Kids to me. They'll spit in a nurse's eye when they're taken to hospital—they crunch a thermometer in their teeth when they're having their temperatures taken—the youngest are the worst.

[JUDY gets up to change costume. PAUL rises.]

JUDY. Don't get up. We change in here. What's got into the Germans anyway? [JUDY is behind curtain now.]

PAUL. [*Crosses D. R.*] Lord knows . . . A chap I know got on to a good idea. He got so sick of the prisoners' everlasting heel-clicking and heiling that he put them all in bedroom slippers. When they tried to click nothing happened—so the arm went sort of halfway up and flopped, and the heel stuck halfway in their throats.

JUDY. How long have you got?

PAUL. Four days.

[*Enter TOMMY. JUDY still behind curtain.*]

TOMMY. [*At entrance.*] Oh, sorry, I thought one of the girls was here.

JUDY. I'll be out in a minute, Tommy. That's Rosalind's Squadron Leader. Mr. Leader, this is Quentin Thompson.

[*The men shake hands.*]

PAUL. [*Not having much to say.*] I'm just waiting for Rosalind.

TOMMY. She'll be off in a minute.—You up on leave? [L. C.]

PAUL. Four days. [*Smiling.*] We hope to get married tomorrow. [R. C.]

[TOMMY takes out cigarette. Murmurs something like "Really!"]

JUDY. [*Shouting from behind.*] Does Rosalind know?

PAUL. Not yet.

TOMMY. Well . . . we'll miss Rosalind.

PAUL. [*Smiling.*] It's all been pretty sudden.

TOMMY. Yes.

[PAUL looks at him sharply. TOMMY's voice is strained, he looks agitated. JUDY comes out—looks from one to the other and breaks brightly into the silence.]

JUDY. What do you think of my new frock? [*Coming c., between them.*]

PAUL. Looks pretty good to me.

JUDY. It's an event getting something new nowadays . . . usually we get something made up out of stock.

[TOMMY, who has taken no notice, suddenly wheels round on PAUL.]

TOMMY. Why the hell did you have to pick on Rosalind?

PAUL. [*Coldly, after astonished pause.*] What d'you mean?

[JUDY is speechless. She stands rigid, looking simply from one to the other.]

TOMMY. For all you want, any other woman would have done.

PAUL. [*Slowly—furiously.*] For—all—I—want?

JUDY. [*Sharply.*] Tommy!

TOMMY. I know your kind. What you must have you must have at once. The objective must be achieved. If you've sufficient imagination to think about your bloody immortality that must be achieved too. You must find a woman! You must leave a child! There must be no delay!!!

JUDY. Tommy, shurrup! [*To PAUL, breathlessly.*] He doesn't know what he's saying.

TOMMY. So you wrap it all up in the glamor of a head-long romance. You sweep her off her feet before you break her heart . . .

PAUL. Listen! I don't know who you are or what kind of wild neurotic you may be, but another word and I'll lay you flat on the floor!

JUDY. [*Rushing at PAUL.*] He doesn't know what he's saying. He's crazy with nerves. You'd like him if you really knew him—he loves Rosalind.

PAUL. [*At TOMMY.*] So do I! And I've got her! And I'm keeping her!

TOMMY. [*More gently.*] Sure you'll keep her. You'll take her away from the kind of life she's happy in and you'll have her sitting alone in a room waiting for you to come back. It's a swell life you're offering her.

PAUL. She knows what I'm offering her.

TOMMY. [*Bitterly.*] She thinks she does—she's only got your version of it.

[ROSALIND comes running along the corridor. We hear her voice.]

ROSALIND. [*Off.*] Hurry, Bubbles.

JUDY. [*Sharply.*] Here she is! Shut up, both of you! Tommy, don't you dare open your mouth!

[TOMMY turns D. L., goes to TONI's table. Enter ROSALIND.]

ROSALIND. Paul! I was terrified you weren't coming.

PAUL. [*Quietly.*] Hello, darling! [*He takes both her hands. They don't kiss. They are R. C.*]

[ROSALIND, looking round to JUDY and TOMMY.]

ROSALIND. You've all met each other?

JUDY. [*Sitting on mattress.*] Sure, we've been having quite a chat.

ROSALIND. [*To PAUL.*] It's lovely to see you—how long have you got?

PAUL. Four days.

ROSALIND. [*Smiling.*] Four days! . . . Four days that I don't have to worry about you . . . Darling, we're both on again in a second for the finale, then we'll have a little party here in the interval for the four of us—you and Judy and Tommy and I . . . I must change. [*Dashes behind curtain. Breathlessly.*] Tommy, will you be an angel and see that Gert brings in the order I gave her?

JUDY. I'll go. [*Exits.*]

ROSALIND. I'm so happy—what do you think of our blitz?

PAUL. I've been telling them—it terrifies me.

ROSALIND. [*Laughing.*] We're getting terribly superior—we're becoming hardened front-liners, aren't we, Tommy? [JUDY enters.] Judy, give me a hand, duckie?

JUDY. [*To PAUL.*] Rosalind always needs somebody to help her. I guess you'll have to take me along, too. [*Goes behind curtain.*]

ROSALIND. Paul, will you be in front for the second house?

PAUL. Shall I?

ROSALIND. Do, darling. I'd like to show off. [*JUDY and she come out.*] We've got to dash. But we're only on for a minute at the end. [*She smiles and blows a kiss to him at door.*] Bye, darling.

[*TOMMY and PAUL are alone.*]

TOMMY. [*Crossing u. c.*] Will you excuse me? I'm not staying for the party. I hope you'll be happy . . .

PAUL. Thanks.

TOMMY. I'm afraid I'm not a very good loser.

PAUL. Who is?

[*TOMMY goes out. PAUL stands a moment deep in thought, hands in pockets. Faint strains of music from stage—the thunder of the guns goes on. PAUL goes to window—opens it and looks up at sky. The gunfire is louder.*]

VOICE FROM STREET. [*Harshly.*] Hey, you down there! Put that bloody light out!

[*PAUL slams the window to.*]

PAUL. Phew! [*Crosses to a chair, takes out cigarette, lights it. Picks ROSALIND's dressing-gown off floor and hangs it tenderly over back of her chair. Knock on the door. PAUL says, "Come in!" It is GERT.*]

GERT. [*At c., PAUL is D. R.*] There's a bloke at the door creating something awful—says there's a light. [*He looks at window.*] There ain't no light in here.

PAUL. There was. I forgot—I opened the window. I'm terribly sorry.

GERT. [*Crossing to PAUL.*] Gor! Reckon you're not used to this end of it . . . never mind, I'll swear blind there wasn't no light. It ain't a copper—it's only a civilian . . . Some of them get windy about lights.

PAUL. They've reason to, bigod.

GERT. Especially when Jerry's right overhead they get

windy. They're coming over in waves tonight—every five minutes.

PAUL. Since when?

GERT. The alert went about eight and they was here a couple of minutes after. Reckon they've five hundred planes on the job tonight.

PAUL. [*Smiling slightly.*] How d'you know?

GERT. [*Airily.*] Oh, you get so's you can kinda tell. [*A bomb lands very close. GERT continues.*] There you are, sir.

PAUL. Blimey, is that what they sound like?

GERT. Yes, unless it's a bull's-eye, then you don't hear anything. Say, what's the ribbon for?

[PAUL glances down at his D. F. C. ribbon.]

PAUL. [*Casually.*] Oh, that. That was for dropping a bomb on a bridge.

GERT. In Germany?

PAUL. In Belgium.

GERT. You know, my brother 'Erbert brought down a Jerry right over London the other day and my mother watched the whole thing. There was the Jerry, sir. [*Demonstrates with her hands.*] This one here, sir, and here's me brother, 'Erbert. So up comes 'Erbert—clonks the Jerry—and flies away upside down. 'Erbert was a trapeze artist, sir. [*Laughing.*] Well, I'll go and tell this bloke there wasn't no light. See you later.

[PAUL is alone again. Looks around the room. Looks at ROSALIND's photograph. Crosses to mattresses. Presently JUDY and ROSALIND come running in.]

ROSALIND. [*Gaily.*] Darling, we've got twenty minutes interval! [*Shouts from door.*] Gert!

[JUDY goes to her dressing-table.]

PAUL. Gert is interviewing somebody at the door.

ROSALIND. She is?

PAUL. I opened the window and forgot about the light.

ROSALIND. Paul! [*She goes to her dressing-table. Fixes hair.*]

JUDY. You'll spend the night in the jug.

GERT. [*Round the door.*] It's all right, sir. I settled him.

PAUL. Thanks, Gert.

ROSALIND. Gert—bring in the drinks, duckie.

GERT. They're right here.

ROSALIND. Tell Tommy.

PAUL. He's not coming.

ROSALIND. [*Disappointed.*] Oh!

[*JUDY exchanges glances with PAUL.*]

JUDY. [*Anxiously to PAUL.*] Where is he?

PAUL. I don't know. [*JUDY slips in behind curtain to take off her dress. GERT brings in tray with champagne, sandwiches, etc.*] This looks pretty good to me.

ROSALIND. [*Excited and happy.*] Will you open it, darling? Oh, Paul, it's so good to see you!

[*GERT has gone out. JUDY is out of sight. PAUL suddenly takes her in his arms. It is a passionate embrace which leaves no doubt of the sudden violence of this affair. They stand there till JUDY comes out.*]

JUDY. Don't mind me.

PAUL. [*Smiling over ROSALIND's head.*] We don't, Judy. [*They break apart. JUDY has a camel-hair coat wrapped over her underclothes. She puts her dress on her chair.*] Oh, Judy, you're not going away. We're having a party. [*PAUL is opening bottle.*]

JUDY. [*Coming c.*] I'll have a drink with you—then I must go and find Tommy.

ROSALIND. What's the worry about Tommy? He's all right.

JUDY. [*Worried.*] Yes, I know, sweetie, but I don't like to think of him alone.

ROSALIND. Darling, he's not a baby.

JUDY. He's kinda lost . . . the blitz tears his nerves to ribbons . . .

[PAUL is pouring out three glasses.]

ROSALIND. Where d'you think he's gone?

JUDY. Probably to the pub. He always does.

ROSALIND. You're not going out there! Paul, don't let her!

JUDY. I'll put on Gert's tin hat.

PAUL. I think you'd be crazy.

[JUDY picks up a glass.]

JUDY. Come on. I'm going to drink your health . . . I'm the first to do it. [*Lifts her glass.*] To Paul and Rosalind. To a long and happy life . . . [*Interposes with a rather shaky smile to PAUL.*] I love her, too, you know . . .

[ROSALIND and JUDY on platform, C. JUDY R. of ROSALIND. PAUL below platform, just below end of piano.]

ROSALIND. [*Impulsively.*] And I love you, darling.

JUDY. [*Still with glass in her hand.*] And to lots of fun . . . and to happy landings, Paul.

PAUL. Thank you, Judy.

ROSALIND. [*Embracing her.*] Thank you, darling. [JUDY drinks.] And to you, Judy. [*Smiling.*] A brilliant future and the happiness you want—with Tommy.

JUDY. [*Trying to laugh.*] Tommy doesn't give a damn about me, darling.

[ROSALIND dips finger in champagne and dabs it behind JUDY's ears.]

ROSALIND. For luck—and happy landings. [*They drink happily.*] Good, isn't it?

JUDY. Grand . . . Listen, darling, I must fly.

ROSALIND. See if he's in the theatre—if he's not, don't go out.

[PAUL sits L. of stack of mattresses. JUDY doesn't promise. She goes to door.]

JUDY. Keep a sandwich for me.

ROSALIND. Sure. [JUDY has gone. To PAUL, quietly.] Dear Judy . . . she's crazy about Tommy. She looks after him like a mother. [PAUL doesn't speak.] I can't believe it's you. [She sits by him, R. of mattresses, facing front.]

PAUL. You will, darling. We're getting married tomorrow morning.

ROSALIND. Paul!

PAUL. I've got the license in my pocket.

ROSALIND. Oh, Paul! [Laughs a little shakily.] You'd think I couldn't say anything but "Oh, Paul"—but you see, darling, I find it so hard to believe . . . did they give you leave for this?

PAUL. No! The whole Squadron's got four days.

ROSALIND. [A little edgily.] Why?

PAUL. Special job on when we go back.

ROSALIND. [Quietly, not looking at him.] Oh.

PAUL. But four days is a long time.

ROSALIND. [After a pause.] Where are we getting married?

PAUL. Caxton Hall—at eleven.

ROSALIND. [Gaily.] I'll be there.

[There is the sudden whistle of a bomb. PAUL seizes ROSALIND and they fling themselves flat on the floor. The whistle lasts a couple of seconds. Then comes the crash. The place shakes.]

PAUL. [Raising his head.] Phew! . . . All right?

ROSALIND. Yes. It was pretty near, wasn't it?

PAUL. Much too close for me. [He helps her up.] I'd make a lousy civilian.

ROSALIND. You should have heard them last night.

Darling, tell me more about the wedding—when did you fix it?

PAUL. This evening—I couldn't give your age to the registrar . . . I didn't know.

ROSALIND. [*Laughing.*] Twenty.

PAUL. [*Softly.*] Twenty.

ROSALIND. How old are you?

PAUL. Twenty-five.

ROSALIND. [*Quietly.*] When I'm seventy you'll be seventy-five. When I'm eighty you'll be eighty-five. [*They look at each other a little tensely. She throws her arms impulsively around him. Whispering.*] Darling, I'll pray for that.

PAUL. I will, too.

ROSALIND. I don't want anything else in the world. [*They sit in a silent embrace for a moment.*] What shall we do tonight?

PAUL. I've booked a table at the Café D'Argent. It's underground.

ROSALIND. We'll dance together again. Oh, Paul, I'm so happy. I don't know how I'm going to get through the second show tonight. [*Knock at door. It is GERT.*] Come in!

GERT. Isn't Judy here?

ROSALIND. [*Rising.*] Who wants her?

GERT. [*A shade anxiously.*] L. S. She's . . . er . . . [*She goes out.*]

ROSALIND. Gert! [*She comes back.*] Where did that last bomb drop?

GERT. [*In a daze.*] The pub on the corner. A direct hit. [*She goes out.*]

[*ROSALIND and PAUL stare at each other in sudden apprehensiveness.*]

ROSALIND. [*Whispers.*] Paul!

PAUL. I must go and see.

ROSALIND. I'm coming, too.

PAUL. No. No, darling, please . . . listen, we don't know that she went there. She may be still in the theatre. Stay here until I find out. [*He goes out.*]

[*ROSALIND presses hands against her face. Her eyes are wide with fear. She stands quite still as if she were holding her breath. LILA dashes in.*]

LILA. D'you know where Judy went? [*ROSALIND can't speak. She just stares and shakes her head.*] She's nowhere in the theatre.

ROSALIND. Is Tommy on stage?

LILA. No! [*LILA goes out again.*]

[*The guns are loud and heavy. ROSALIND drops on the mattresses. She murmurs quietly and without hysteria: "Please, not Judy!" TONI comes in, white and strained. Stands by JUDY's table.*]

TONI. Rosalind! [*She flies into ROSALIND's arms.*] . . . She went to the pub . . . she asked me where Tommy was . . . and I told her.

ROSALIND. We may be wrong. Perhaps he wasn't there—and she went somewhere else. [*TONI doesn't speak.*] Has anyone gone down?

TONI. The men are all there. [*The clanging of ambulance bells as they pass window.*] There's the ambulances.

[*BUBBLES comes in.*]

BUBBLES. [*Sharply.*] Where is she?

TONI. We don't know. [*The GIRLS crowd round door. Almost at breaking point.*] What're you coming in here for? Get back to your own rooms! [*TONI picks up glass from JUDY's table.*]

ROSALIND. [*Crossing R. to R. C.*] That's Judy's. She didn't finish it. She wanted to find Tommy.

GERT. [*At door.*] Curtain going up in five minutes! [*She goes. GIRLS take no notice.*]

ROSALIND. She wanted to find Tommy. Toni, I can't

stand it. I've got to go down there. [*Starts to dash for door.*]

TONI. [*Stopping her.*] They won't let you near. I ran down. There's a cordon round it already.

[*Enter LILA, her face working with emotion, keeping a tight and painful grip on herself. Finds it difficult to speak.*]

ROSALIND. Well ——!

LILA. Judy . . . [*Turns away R.*]

TONI. [*Sobbing.*] Oh, God! [*At lower end of piano.*]

ROSALIND. [*Quietly.*] And Tommy . . . ?

LILA. [*Nods.*] Both of them, together. They've just lifted them out.

[*ROSALIND stands staring steadily in front of her. TONI sobs bitterly. Enter PAUL. Goes to ROSALIND and puts his arm around her shoulders. She doesn't move. She seems quite stunned. They are L. C.*]

ROSALIND. Why Judy? Why Tommy? [*She turns suddenly and puts her head on PAUL's shoulder and sobs.*]
Oh, Paul!

[*GERT comes to door.*]

GERT. [*Grimly.*] Curtain going up in three minutes.

TONI. [*Weeping.*] What are we going to do? We can't go on.

[*LILA has been wiping her eyes. Suddenly takes notice and pulls herself together.*]

LILA. [*After pause, speaking quietly and steadily.*]
We go on. The curtain goes up in three minutes.

ROSALIND. [*Weeping.*] Lila . . . we can't go on!!

PAUL. [*Very steadily.*] Do it, Rosalind.

ROSALIND. [*Weeping.*] I can't! I can't! [*TONI sobs, too.*]

LILA. He's right. *He* has to do it. We all have to, in this.
[*Goes over to chair, picks up JUDY's dress.*] Here's

Judy's outfit for her first number. Take her place. You go on for her.

ROSALIND. [*Sobbing bitterly.*] I can't.

PAUL. [*Quietly.*] It's kind of symbolic, darling. One falls out—another steps in—soldiers or civilians. [*ROSALIND stops crying a little. With a kind of apologetic laugh.*] We've no choice. It's a case of closing the ranks, that's all.

[*TONI still sobs brokenly. ROSALIND is quiet. Looks at JUDY's dress.*]

GERT. Curtain up in two minutes.

[*Quietly, undramatically, ROSALIND picks up JUDY's dress and goes in behind curtain. PAUL looks after her. LILA goes to TONI and tries to comfort her. PAUL crosses D. R. C.*]

TONI. It's Tommy's Piccadilly number—you can't ask her to sing it.

LILA. [*Quietly.*] Judy would have done it.

[*TONI stops crying. This is a thought that hasn't occurred to her.*]

TONI. Yes, I guess she would.

[*ROSALIND comes out in JUDY's dress.*]

ROSALIND. Toni.

[*TONI goes to her and fastens her dress. ROSALIND goes to PAUL. He looks at ROSALIND and waits. ROSALIND is trying hard to get a grip on herself. PAUL goes up to her and puts his hand under her chin. He raises it very slightly. She smiles back at him.*]

GERT. Curtain going up.

[*Offstage the music, "Tipperary," starts. ROSALIND and TONI dash out. PAUL looks at LILA.*]

LILA. Good girls!

[PAUL picks up champagne glass (JUDY'S) and silently toasts. We hear the GIRLS singing offstage.]

BLACKOUT

[The curtain rises immediately on the in-one set of the theatre we saw at the opening of the play. ROSALIND and TONI enter singing "Tipperary." They march to c. and continue the song as]

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